

DRAFT
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**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FOR THE TOWN OF
HILLSBORO, VIRGINIA**

Hillsboro Planning Commission
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RESOLUTION
(placeholder for Town Council approval)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
II. INTRODUCTION	<u>1211</u>
III. HISTORY AND HISTORIC ASSETS	<u>1716</u>
IV. NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES	<u>2827</u>
V. POPULATION AND HOUSING	<u>3736</u>
VI. BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	<u>4039</u>
VII. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES.....	<u>4543</u>
VIII. LAND USE.....	<u>5349</u>
IX. TRANSPORTATION	<u>6559</u>
APPENDIX A	<u>7165</u>
APPENDIX B.....	<u>7266</u>
APPENDIX C.....	<u>7670</u>
APPENDIX D	<u>8074</u>
APPENDIX E.....	<u>8175</u>

List of Appendices

APPENDIX A: Hillsboro Town Council Comprehensive Plan Review Guidance

APPENDIX B: National Register of Historic Places Architectural Survey of Hillsboro
(Excerpts)

APPENDIX C: Soil Characteristics

APPENDIX D: 2010 Census Data

APPENDIX E: Hillsboro Business Advisory Group - Chairman Report

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Comprehensive Plan (Plan) begins with an Introduction that provides a broad outline of the legal basis and purpose for the Plan, the planning history of the Town of Hillsboro and the significant and crucial challenges the Town faces in the near- and long-term future.

The Comprehensive Plan has been organized into chapters designed to provide detailed background and additional information on History and Historical Assets, Natural and Environmental Resources, Population and Housing, Business and Economic Development, Community Facilities and Services, Land Use, and Transportation. Within these chapters the Comprehensive Plan conveys goals, policies and action items that are crafted to provide a pathway for the Town and its future leaders that will lead to ensuring the viability of Hillsboro by protecting and enhancing its unique identity, distinctiveness and desirability. Although organized topically to provide a logical structure, most of the chapters are inextricably intertwined, bound together by common threads that can be summarized in the key goals that are embedded throughout this document.

This Comprehensive Plan and its series of goals, policies and recommended actions is promulgated to ensure Hillsboro can express a clear, conscious and concrete plan of action for the next decade. This Plan will position Hillsboro so as to preserve and enhance the Town as an exceptional place to live. The Hillsboro 2020 Comprehensive Plan is a policy document that guides and informs Town decision making in the immediate and long term. It offers creative but eminently workable and responsible goals, policies and actions. It describes the Town's historic, physical and social character, examines and responds to local and regional issues and provides a blueprint for solutions that ensures respect for the past.

The 2020 Comprehensive Plan includes updates that are responsive to the reality that Hillsboro and its environs are much different than that of 2004 when the original Comprehensive Plan was drafted. Many of the goals, policies, and actions recommended in the 2004 Plan have been—or will soon be—achieved. As such, this revision to the Plan takes those achievements and their consequences into account, and provides the context for the goals, policies, and actions recommended for the next decade.

Lastly, this Comprehensive Plan is an organic, democratically derived document representing community consensus and respecting a wide range of thought. While its statutory role is as a functional guide for policy makers, it should also serve as a platform for all residents to utilize in asserting and affirming that Hillsboro is an asset of special significance that must, and will, be preserved for generations to come.

This Executive Summary provides highlights of the main actions proposed in each chapter of the Hillsboro Comprehensive Plan. Complete enumeration of the proposed policies and action items can be found at the conclusion of each chapter.

The Comprehensive Plan utilizes the terms *Goal*, *Policy* and *Action Item*, defined as follows:

1. GOAL: *Object or end that one strives to attain.*

2. POLICY: *Principle plan or course of action.*

3. ACTION ITEM: *Act or activity that can be measured as to completion.*

History and Historic Assets

GOAL:

Maintain the rich historic identity of Hillsboro by preserving and protecting its historical, architectural and archaeological assets.

Hillsboro is a community with roots dating to the pre-Revolutionary period of American history. Its unique characteristics bear the imprint of its geography, geology and the harnessing of those by pioneering and entrepreneurial settlers. Established and then shaped by the evolution of Early America, Hillsboro’s archaeology, architecture and social past represents a rich trove of American history. It is the desire and intent of the townspeople to preserve this small, scenic, rural community in a historical, agricultural, quiet and natural setting. Among the smallest incorporated towns in Virginia and in the country, Hillsboro is a “living” relic by virtue of its legal status as well as its physicality. Within its apparent anachronisms reside its significance and value in the present and the future. This Plan strives to preserve that history for the present and the future.

As an overlay to typical zoning and land use regulations, this Plan suggests a series of protective measures that derive their authority from the Town’s Historic District. These measures include, among others, updating the existing Historic District map to be consistent with the 2010 National Register expanded designation and the 2016 Town boundary line adjustment. The Plan recommends a greater emphasis on the use of the Historic District overlay and structures identified on the Historically Significant Buildings List to preserve and maintain the Town’s historic attributes. In addition, a review of the Historic District Architectural Guidelines is recommended, including a review of their scope and applicability. Restoration of the historic Woodgrove Bridge as a pedestrian/multi-modal access bridge connecting to the Town’s planned Janney Mill Trail and Charles Town Pike is also identified as an action item.

All with the goal of maintaining the historic identity of Hillsboro, this plan instructs the Town to actively engage and seek the participation of governmental entities at all levels as well as other public and private organizations sharing the Town’s vision for historic preservation.

Natural and Environmental Resources

GOAL:

Respect and preserve the natural environment and resources of the Town and surrounding area, including viewsheds and mountain ridges along and adjacent to Short Hill Mountain, and the North Fork Catactin Creek.

The Town of Hillsboro exists as a result of geological forces rendered eons ago that formed a narrow gap in a steep mountain chain, making this small area of ground heavily traversed by man and beast for thousands of years. Today, at each opening of this gap are striking, beautiful vistas of rolling hills and farmland, set against the magnificent backdrop of the Short Hills and the Blue Ridge Mountains. This Plan emphasizes the need for sensitivity to the local environment for a number of reasons beyond the aesthetic.

Preserving and protecting open spaces, steep slopes, forests, creek corridors, wetlands and the overall natural integrity of the Short Hills from encroaching development pressures are enumerated as high priority issues of the Town. The Plan puts forward a series of suggested actions the Town should endeavor on its own initiative and in conjunction with neighboring jurisdictions and other public and private entities to support its environmental protection goals.

Air, noise and light pollution have been little considered in the past but are particularly acute issues for the Town of Hillsboro proper in light of the heavy volume of Charles Town Pike traffic, accentuated by the close proximity of residences to the highway. This Plan proposes an active effort to address these issues.

Population and Housing

GOAL: Maintain a diverse community of well-preserved homes within a pleasing environment consistent with the historic, close-knit, character of Hillsboro.

The Town of Hillsboro has maintained a relatively steady population for decades and, because of its already full development and small size, is unlikely to deviate significantly. In essence, there is minimal room for growth within the Town limits. Virtually every dwelling in the Town is of 18th- or 19th-century vintage, a significant number of log and stone construction dating to the late 1700s.

Because of these factors, future population growth and new home construction in the Town proper is unlikely to be significant. The Town has long been fortunate to have citizens who are caring and committed to preserving and maintaining their historic homes. This Plan asserts the Town's duty to support, encourage and aide its residents who are investing in maintaining Hillsboro's historical identity with policies that will help protect and enhance their property values. Among the Plan's policies is to preserve the historic character of the residential areas within the Hillsboro Historic District and

also ensure that development in the Hillsboro area is compatible with surrounding properties. At the same time, the Plan sets as policy that zoning and planning ordinances should ensure balance between residential and commercial activity and account for potential future demands.

Business and Economic Development

GOALS:

Facilitate appropriate business and employment opportunities within Hillsboro that enhance the community and its quality of life in a manner consistent with the Town's historic and rural setting and are sensitive to environmental concerns.

Promote businesses that can help guarantee the financial sustainability of Hillsboro and are compatible with the character and scale of the Town.

Support and encourage traditional farming and agricultural operations on the open lands within and surrounding the Town.

Protect the surrounding farmlands and viewsheds that are imperative to preserving the historical context of the Town and to ensuring its unique attractiveness critical to agritourism.

Commerce has been a shaping force through Hillsboro's long history and this evolution continues in the 21st century. A number of the present residences in Hillsboro were at one time commercial establishments or served both a business and residential role. However, the Town has long been zoned entirely as residential, with exceptions made for existing commercial uses. In recognition of a changed environment within the Town as a result of the successful implementation of the Town's traffic calming and pedestrian improvements projects, the Plan recommends the Town promote a balance of residential parcels with the addition of right sized and appropriate commerce, and encourages appropriate small businesses that expand the tax base to ensure economic viability.

The Plan recommends the Town take action to carefully evaluate its existing Zoning Ordinance and propose revisions to address architectural alterations for commercial buildings, hours of operation, noise limitations, signage, tax rates, provision of off-street parking (should the enterprise require customer interface), and the need for increased services such as water. The Town should also establish commercial infrastructure connection rates for water and sewer services.

The Plan recognizes the growth of home-based enterprises that are largely the result of advanced communications capabilities. The Plan proposals by no means seek to discourage telecommuting or the establishment of other home-based business that are consistent with overall objectives of maintaining the historic character of Hillsboro.

This Plan urges close consultation and cooperation with Loudoun County and other

jurisdictions on business-related issues in the immediate vicinity of Hillsboro, including tourism.

Community Facilities and Services

GOALS:

Protect and ensure the long-term sustainability of the Old Stone School as Town Hall and community center.

Protect public health and safety with a safe, reliable and fiscally sustainable drinking water system.

Protect public health and the environment by providing a community wastewater treatment system.

Establish a community postal facility to serve residents.

Maintain a strong partnership with the Hillsboro Charter Academy to ensure its long-term viability.

For most of its history the Town of Hillsboro has provided few services or infrastructure for its citizens beyond its water system. Hillsboro has one municipal building, built in 1874 as the Locust Grove Academy and now known as Hillsboro's Old Stone School, which serves as the Town Hall, community center, event venue and rental facility.

Adjacent to the Old Stone School is the Hillsboro Charter Academy, a community-run public charter school. The Loudoun County Public School property was brought into the Town through the 2016 Hillsboro boundary line adjustment.

Public safety is provided by a number of professional and volunteer organizations. Street maintenance within the Town limits is provided by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). Solid waste and recycling is managed through a contract the Town has with a trash disposal service. Sewerage and wastewater treatment and disposal are the responsibility of individual property owners.

With the completion of the Hillsboro Safe Drinking Water Project in 2020, for the first time in its history the Town has a safe and reliable municipal drinking water system capable of serving all Town residents.

The Town of Hillsboro does not have a public sanitary sewer system. All waste management within the Town is handled independently by the parcel owner, and includes on-site wastewater treatment facilities such as septic systems, pump and haul, or other alternative systems. As part of the Town's roadway and pedestrian improvement project, a sanitary sewer force main and laterals will be installed under Route 9. Before a community wastewater management solution is implemented, the Town will need to

identify the most appropriate and cost-effective treatment alternative and secure the necessary funding for installation and maintenance. The Plan recommends the Town make the identification of a community wastewater management solution an immediate priority, with implementation by 2024.

With the completion of the Town's roadway and pedestrian improvement project, additional town-owned facilities and appurtenances will require ongoing maintenance. These requirements include maintenance of street lighting systems, clearing of storm water drains, and replacement or repair of damaged signs and other roadway and sidewalk components (e.g. pavers, railings, curbs, etc.). The Plan recommends the Town develop policies and define roles and responsibilities to ensure proper maintenance of the roadway, sidewalks, and other common areas within the Town.

Land Use

GOALS:

Ensure land-use plans that will retain Hillsboro's historic, small-town character in a rural setting and accommodate appropriate and contextually scaled commercial and agritourism activity.

Play an active role to ensure, where development does occur beyond the Town limits, that every effort is made to achieve results consistent with the objectives of this plan.

The land in Hillsboro is dedicated primarily to 18th- and 19th-century stone, clapboard and stucco homes, assorted barns, outbuildings, a former church and a few small commercial establishments. Gone are the mills that were at one time the center of the Town's life and activity. The land use pattern in Hillsboro has remained virtually unchanged for more than 100 years. The scarcity of available land within the Town limits, the geography of the immediately adjacent mountainsides and floodplain, and the agricultural uses of the land surrounding Hillsboro have left the immediate vicinity remarkably unchanged for some two centuries.

This Plan strongly recommends continued land uses that are harmonious with the Town's rural setting and will encourage the retention of open spaces and of the existing viewsheds on all sides of the Town. With completion of the Hillsboro Traffic-Calming project and the advent of a walkable, accessible history-rich community, Hillsboro's growing appeal as a destination and the likelihood and desirability of appropriate and contextually scaled commercial activity is greater, prompting the need to carefully review the Town's zoning and subdivision regulations. The Plan recommends policies to maintain the Town's diverse residential, commercial, and agricultural activities and an appropriate balance that is compatible with the Town's rural and historic character.

In light of the past and expected continued use of residential properties for short-term rental opportunities, including bed and breakfast establishments in a primary dwelling and rentals in accessory buildings, the Plan recommends these uses be permitted under

the Residential Zoning District. This Comprehensive Plan also recommends reviewing and modifying the Zoning districts to better align with property boundaries where possible and appropriate to eliminate situations where a single parcel is zoned as more than one district, particularly for those parcels brought into the Town through the 2016 boundary line adjustment and zoned Agricultural-Conservancy.

The 2016 boundary line adjustment brought additional property into the Town, much of it being open space consisting of flood plain and/or steep slopes and agricultural lands, some of which have been permanently preserved through conservation easement. All of the parcels or portions thereof brought into the Town limits through the boundary line adjustment were zoned in the Agricultural-Conservancy District.

The Plan recommends Hillsboro's zoning regulations continue to emphasize residential use with sufficient flexibility to provide for compatible commercial growth in support of the Town's economic needs. Rezoning parcels to the Commercial District may be necessary in the future as Hillsboro completes the traffic calming and pedestrian safety project and the commercial appeal increases. The Plan recommends any rezoning to the Commercial District carefully consider the specific attributes of the parcel and its suitability for commercial use, such as, but not limited to, available parking, pedestrian and motorized traffic access, compatibility with the Town's historic character, and potential impacts on the Residential District (e.g., from noise, lighting), Town drinking water resources, and wastewater system.

Transportation

GOALS:

Provide safe and adequate transportation—both vehicular and pedestrian—throughout the Town, while protecting and enhancing the historic character of the Town.

Expand upon the Town's multi-modal trail and sidewalk system to provide safe pedestrian access to all citizens within Hillsboro and to link directly to a county network of trails.

Develop plans to provide adequate parking to accommodate anticipated growth in commercial and agritourism related activities.

Hillsboro's history and development is largely influenced by being on a strategically important transportation route. While that position originally was an engine for growth, prosperity and progress. Historically, traffic through Hillsboro was welcomed as it meant business, commerce and trade. However, over the past half-century it placed the viability and livability of Hillsboro in jeopardy, as the volume of traffic virtually overtook the Town and became the greatest negative to living in the Town.

At the dawn of 2020, a massive transformation is in progress as the Town's Traffic Calming, Pedestrian Safety and Infrastructure project is underway, with the intent to reclaim Hillsboro's historic "Main Street," creating a safe vehicular and pedestrian environment, and once again reaping the positive benefits from the Town's strategic location on an important transportation route.

II. INTRODUCTION

Legal Basis of Plan

The Commonwealth of Virginia requires that every locality establish a Planning Commission to promote the orderly development of the locality and its environs. In turn, as cited in Sections 15.2-2223 and 15.2-2230 of the Code of Virginia, the local Planning Commission must prepare and recommend, and the governing body must adopt, a Comprehensive Plan for the physical development of the community and review the plan at least once every five years to determine if amendments are advisable.

Although the Plan sets the policies that are to guide land use and development-related decisions made by public officials and property owners alike during the next decade, it is not a regulating ordinance. Implementation of the Plan occurs through ordinances and regulations that contain use and development regulations that landowners and residents must follow. Therefore, these regulations must be as consistent with the goals and objectives of the Plan as possible. It is also important that the decisions made by Town officials be as consistent as possible with the policies in this Plan, as Virginia courts have given great weight to local land use decisions made in conformance with an adopted Comprehensive Plan.

Purpose and Timeframe of the Plan

The Hillsboro Comprehensive Plan is made for the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the territory which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, order, convenience, and general welfare of the inhabitants. This Plan attempts to project Town conditions and needs for the next 10 years. Longer projections are too uncertain in the face of the rapid change occurring in the region.

Hillsboro's Planning History

Hillsboro's history of planning in the past 50 years has been relatively modest in its scope, comprised primarily of assorted Town zoning regulations and subdivision ordinances and periodic attempts at devising a Comprehensive Plan. Given Hillsboro's extremely small size, in both population and area, and the fact that within its existing boundaries there is little available space for new development, past Town Councils have felt little impetus or pressure to establish more formal guidelines.

The initial 2004 Plan was a result of the Town Council's recognition of the pressing need to establish for Hillsboro, in keeping with the wishes and desires of its citizens, an overarching course of action that would preserve its unique qualities—derived from its nearly 250 years of existence—for the present and the future.

The 2004 Comprehensive Plan was promulgated to clearly express Hillsboro’s conscious and concrete plan of action for the following decade. The Plan’s clear objectives and action items positioned Hillsboro to preserve and enhance the Town as an exceptional place to live, work, and play.

In 2018 the Hillsboro Town Council charged the Planning Commission with reviewing and updating the Comprehensive Plan. The Council’s guidance to the Planning Commission (Appendix A) recognized that many of the goals, policies, and actions recommended in the 2004 Plan have been, or will soon be achieved. A revision to the Plan is necessary to take those achievements and their consequences into account, and provide the context for the goals, policies, and actions recommended for the next decade. The Council noted that the current—and imminent—reality of Hillsboro and its environs is much different than that of 2004, and thus the parameters of possibility for the future visions of Hillsboro have changed significantly.

Vision of the Future

For the goals, policies and recommended actions of this Plan to be effective in guiding future land use and development within the Town and its environs, they must relate to what is most important to Town residents and to their vision of the future. For Hillsboro, this vision is indelibly related to its rich past, its unique history and rural setting.

The preserved richness of its history and the dedication to that history by its residents explain its attractiveness as a place to live in spite of the readily apparent inconveniences imposed upon it by a modern society. Residents believe these historical community characteristics and, thus, our collective ties to the past, serve as the foundation of the community and comprise its most invaluable—and most fragile—assets. This Plan seeks, above all, to protect these assets for the welfare of this and future generations, of both Town residents and those who will, by virtue of Hillsboro’s existence, have the opportunity to see and experience unique facets of an Early American rural village. Accordingly, it is these historic assets that form the foundation of Hillsboro’s vision of its future, namely that:

Hillsboro should remain a unique small rural town whose citizens preserve and cherish its historic, residential, and commercial heritage and maintain and protect its unique physical qualities and environment.

Planning Challenges

Hillsboro’s location at the edge of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area presents both challenges and opportunities. The rapid suburbanization of Loudoun County has brought these large residential development pressures ever closer to the Town. This massive Greater Washington growth and the economic engine it creates, in tandem with the

relative high cost of living within the region, has created a tertiary ring of development to the north and west of Loudoun, comprised of communities that are more affordable for the tens of thousands of workers employed in Loudoun, Fairfax and Greater Washington. This phenomenon has a heightened and direct impact on Hillsboro by virtue of the Town's location on what has become a primary commuter artery linking West Virginia to Loudoun and points east. As residential development of the immediate Hillsboro environs leads to degradation of the Town's scenic, historic and environmental resources and rural character attractive to residents and visitors alike—it also further burdens a transportation corridor already choked by excessive traffic.

Hillsboro's viability as a community will depend significantly on its ability to leverage its recent achievements in traffic calming and pedestrian safety and access throughout the Town. Key to maintaining a viable community will be the effective balance between the residential and historic character of the Town and the corresponding need to enhance with the need to increase economic opportunities that provide long-term fiscal sustainability for the Town. This Plan identifies policies and actions to achieve this balance.

Hillsboro must actively seek future land uses that preserve or complement, rather than detract from its historic and small-town environment. Development of any vacant parcels within the Town must be regulated to ensure that it is compatible with the existing historic structures and cultural fabric of the Town, and does not depreciate existing property values, overwhelm Town services and streets, and degrade the Town's historic character.

The Town must also work closely with Loudoun County and other rural towns and jurisdictions to preserve the scenic, agricultural and forestal landscape surrounding Hillsboro that is as much a part of its identity as the Town proper itself. Action must be taken soon before significant portions of this landscape are irrevocably lost to sprawling subdivisions, replicating scenarios that have recently transpired and permanently transformed neighboring communities.

Cooperative and specific plans must be adopted to provide the policy framework for rural preservation. Use of existing preservation tools, such as open space and conservation easements and land trusts, must be encouraged to the maximum extent possible. New tools for preservation must be pursued through state, county and local legislation.

Plan Goals

To address these serious planning challenges, the Plan outlines a comprehensive set of goals, policies, and actions, contained within each of its chapters. These chapters address important aspects and details of the Town's past and future development. Each chapter begins with a summary of existing conditions, includes projections when appropriate, and then recommends policies and action items to serve as a "pathway" to the future.

As much of this document and its vision for the future are directly related to the history of the Town, Chapter III is intended to provide the necessary historical background of Hillsboro and context for the Plan.

The goals for each chapter are reflective of the Plan's vision statement:

HISTORY AND HISTORIC ASSETS

Maintain the rich historic identity of Hillsboro by preserving and protecting its historical, architectural and archaeological assets.

NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

Respect and preserve the natural environment and resources of the Town and surrounding area, including viewsheds and mountain ridges along and adjacent to Short Hill Mountain, and the Catoctin Creek.

POPULATION AND HOUSING

Maintain a diverse community of well-preserved homes within a pleasing environment consistent with the historic, close-knit, character of Hillsboro.

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Facilitate appropriate business and employment opportunities within Hillsboro that enhance the community and its quality of life in a manner consistent with the Town's historic and rural setting and are sensitive to environmental concerns.

Promote businesses that can help guarantee the financial sustainability of Hillsboro and are compatible with the character and scale of the Town.

Support and encourage traditional farming and agricultural operations on the open lands within and surrounding the Town.

Protect the surrounding farmlands and viewsheds that are imperative to preserving the historical context of the Town and to ensuring its unique attractiveness critical to agritourism.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Protect and ensure the long-term sustainability of the Old Stone School as Town Hall and community center.

Protect public health and safety with a safe, reliable and fiscally sustainable drinking water system.

Protect public health and the environment by providing a community wastewater treatment system.

Establish a community postal facility to serve residents.

Maintain a strong partnership with the Hillsboro Charter Academy to ensure its long-term viability.

LAND USE

Ensure land-use plans that will retain Hillsboro’s historic, small-town character in a rural setting and accommodate appropriate and contextually scaled commercial and agritourism activity.

Play an active role to ensure, where development does occur beyond the Town limits, that every effort is made to achieve results consistent with the objectives of this plan.

TRANSPORTATION

Provide safe and adequate transportation—both vehicular and pedestrian—throughout the Town, while protecting and enhancing the historic character of the Town.

Expand upon the Town’s multi-modal trail and sidewalk system to provide safe pedestrian access to all citizens within Hillsboro and to link directly to a county network of trails.

Develop plans to provide adequate parking to accommodate anticipated growth in commercial and agritourism related activities.

A Living Document

This vision and the corresponding goals for Hillsboro cannot be attained nor sustained unless actively supported by a citizenry prepared to participate by monitoring and altering this Plan as conditions change. This must involve not just the elected and appointed Town officials responsible for preparing the Plan, but all citizens of the community, whose ideas and insights are essential to developing creative and achievable programs that will guide the Town successfully through present and future change.

III. HISTORY AND HISTORIC ASSETS

BACKGROUND

Hillsboro is a community with roots dating to the pre-Revolutionary period of American history. Its unique characteristics bear the imprint of its geography, geology and the harnessing of those by pioneering and entrepreneurial settlers. Established and then shaped by the evolving of Early America, Hillsboro's archaeology, architecture and social past represents a rich trove of American history. It is the desire and intent of the townspeople to preserve this small, scenic, rural community in a historical, agricultural, quiet and natural setting. Among the smallest incorporated towns in Virginia and in the country, Hillsboro is a "living" relic by virtue of its legal status as well as its physicality. Within its apparent anachronisms reside its significance and value to the present and the future.

Early History

European exploration and settlement provide the earliest documented history of the Hillsboro area. Indians known to live and hunt in the area in the 1600s and 1700s were of western Siouan origin and primarily nomadic. To encourage the growth of vegetation attractive to the large game such as elk, buffalo and deer, the Indians periodically burned large swaths of land in the area. Thus, early settlers found much of this country in dense growth of saplings. Settlement led to the disappearance of much of the large game. Deer, bear, wild turkey and small game remained plentiful in the 1700s.

The 1722 Treaty of Albany prohibited Indians from hunting east of the Blue Ridge Mountains and therefore the early settlers in the Loudoun and Hillsboro area had few confrontations with the Native Americans. As they were forced by treaty to abandon the region, organized bands of Indians were unusual in the area. However, it was not uncommon for friendly Indians seeking to conduct trade with the settlers to wander into the settlements.

According to an account by Joseph Nichols, one such Cherokee first appeared in Hillsboro in 1790 and would work for local farmers for a few days, then go off to hunt and fish. During one such expedition, the Cherokee came upon a mulatto enslaved woman named Cassie working on a Wheatland farm. Charmed by her, the Indian bargained with her master for her freedom and married her. With her, the Indian, who later acquired the surname of Redman, built a log cabin on the Short Hill south of Hillsboro. Redman, known as Indian John, went on to become a respected member of the community with many descendants in the area. His Short Hill mountain lot contained fine sandstone, which he dressed and sold for the construction of many of the homes still standing today in the Hillsboro area. Descended from the Redman family was a substantial community that grew on the Short Hill Mountain and beyond that included many of the old black families long associated with Hillsboro, including the Browns,

Ferrells, Mahoneys and Motens.

The development of Hillsboro and its environs was determined by the forces that governed the early land sales of this far western section of the Northern Neck Proprietary, which was inherited by Thomas, sixth Lord Fairfax, in 1710. Lord Fairfax, a friend and patron of the young George Washington, lived much of his life near Winchester. Land values grew with the population of Virginia and speculators, such as Thomas Awbrey, Catesby Cocke and John Colvil, took great interest in what is now western Loudoun. In 1740, John Colvil bought out his partners and conveyed some 46,000 acres to Lord Fairfax heir, William Fairfax. William envisioned two great manors to be administered according to traditional English laws, to be named Shannondale (29,000 acres) and Piedmont (17,000 acres). To the east, Colvil retained some 16,000 acres along Catoctin Creek to create a Catoctin Manor. Today, Route 611 traces the boundary between Catoctin and Piedmont manors. The evolution of the democratic spirit and subsequent American Revolution ended the manor plans.

A wagon road leading from Clarke's Gap to Vestal's Gap at the present-day West Virginia boundary traversed the route of today's Charles Town Pike (Route 9). This path, dating back to at least the 1730s, is the oldest wagon road passing through what would become Leesburg, Winchester and of course Hillsboro, originally referred to as "The Gap." Among the many illustrious travelers of the Vestal's Gap Road was George Washington, who often patronized the tavern run by Edward Thompson in The Gap as he traveled to survey land and visit his many relatives in the region.

Early settlement in this area was stimulated by the growth of population in Pennsylvania of Germans and Quakers seeking religious freedom to be found in the land of William Penn. Looking south for new, fertile lands to farm, many Quaker families migrated to the Loudoun area and had a significant impact on the development of the Hillsboro area.

The first record of settlement in the Hillsboro area, when still referred to as The Gap shows that in 1746 David Potts leased 866 acres on "Kittocktin Run" from Catesby Cocke. The present Potts home and family cemetery are located on this original grant. Records of twice monthly meetings of the Gap Quakers, held at the David Potts home, date to 1755.

Scotts emigrant John McIlhaney, a Stuart fleeing his homeland after the defeat of Prince Charles by King George II at Culloden, arrived in Virginia in 1745. McIlhaney eventually settled on a large tract of land just east of Hillsboro. A prominent citizen, he was commissioned as High Sheriff of Loudoun in 1768. His sons James and John were both officers in the Revolutionary War. James became a large landholder, owning some 9,000 acres from Hillsboro to near Lovettsville and another 4,000 acres around the village of Lincoln. James' death in 1804 dissipated the family fortunes and all descendants migrated away from the area.

As early as 1758 a house and mill in The Gap are noted on a plat of "Tayloe's Kittocktin Lands," probably the old Bucher's Mill on the site of the later Gaver Mill on the eastern

fringe of today's Hillsboro. Thomas Purcell leased 150 acres from John Tayloe in The Gap along the south side of Catoctin Creek. Purcell's heirs purchased this parcel in 1790 with the intent to build a mill on the creek at about the location of today's Gaver Mill Road. This gristmill burned and was rebuilt in the early 1800s. In 1850 the Purcell heirs sold the mill and adjoining land to Henry Gaver, who converted it into a woolen mill.

Also in the late 1700s John Hough built The Gap Mills on 150 acres near the west end of Town he had purchased from William Fairfax in 1759. He willed this gristmill and land in The Gap to his son Mahlon in 1797, one of Hillsboro's original trustees. At that time, today's route 690 was referred to as "the road to Mahlon Hough's mill." Before its relocation, that road passed the Purcell-Gaver mill along the south side of Catoctin Creek upstream, crossing the creek at Zilpha's Rock to join the Vestal's Gap Road (today's Charles Town Pike).

Homes and mills were built in The Gap in the late 1700s, but the Town of Hillsborough was not formally established until December 31, 1802, by act of the Virginia General Assembly. Because of its location on Vestal's Gap Road and the Catoctin Creek, the Town grew quickly into a leading trade center for western Loudoun. Hillsboro was becoming an important mill town, with as many as five mills operating at the same time.

In the late 1700s Mahlon Hough began to sell much of his original 150 acres in The Gap in small lots. Hough sold his mill and house in 1814 to David Janney, who operated the mill until 1837, when the original log mill was either destroyed or abandoned, as that year James and Aquilla Janney built a large stone mill upstream near the current Town boundary. This mill gained fame for its fine flour and meal, serving the local farmers and the entire region of consumers.

Further upstream, E.D. Potts built another gristmill in 1842, whose ruins remain standing on the land today. Purchased by Nathan Neer in 1848, it operated until burned by Union troops during the Civil War, becoming known as the "Old Burnt Mill." Just west of Hillsboro, on Route 751, was a cider mill that operated into the early 1900s attracting great wagons of apples for grinding each fall. Much of its foundation and walls remain standing.

A pure water source was critical to establishment of Hillsboro, especially when the Catoctin Creek was utilized to such an extent to power the Town's mills. Short Hill's influence and importance to the Town is further evident in Hill Tom Spring, which has served the community for nearly 175 years. Named for a free black man who lived in a cabin near the large sandstone spring above the Town, the spring supplied the first gravity water system in Loudoun. Before the Civil War, Samuel Clendening, Jr., used hollowed out pine logs as a conduit from Hill Tom Spring to the tanyard in the center of Town. By the 1850s the logs had deteriorated, and citizens organized a water company and installed iron pipes to carry water to Town pumps at several locations along the road. This unique water system still serves most of the homes in Hillsboro. Supplemented by a well dug in 2002 and optimized by storage tanks and a small treatment facility, the Hill Tom Spring is a vital link to Hillsboro's past and its protection and continuation is a

community imperative. *(See Chapter VIII for detailed description and history of the Hillsboro water system.)*

In the first half of the 19th century, Hillsboro was a bustling and prosperous town, serving the needs of the local farming community, traders and travelers. Shops, stores and craftsmen occupied virtually every house in the Town. During this period there typically were three or four doctors in Town, five or six general stores, a large tanyard and cooper shop, two shoemakers and three taverns. Two blacksmiths, two saddle and harness makers, two wagon makers and a livery stable tended to the needs found in the horse-powered era. Seamstresses and tailors made clothes from the yarn goods produced by the Gaver woolen mill. This prosperity stimulated the construction of and additions to many of the Town's stone houses and, to supply those and outlying households, were a joiners shop and furniture factory.

War, technological and transportation advancements all contributed to a decline in the importance of Hillsboro and, as a result, its prosperity. Prior to the Civil War, the advent of the railroad and the development of new turnpikes ultimately bypassed Hillsboro, drawing trade and commerce away from the town. With the devastation wrought by the Civil War to the area, Hillsboro never regained its prominence and this decline contributed to its relative isolation—and to its preservation.

Just beyond the Town limits at the southernmost crest of Hillsboro's Short Hill Mountains was the site of an African American community for more than 150 years. Descended from enslaved and free blacks, the families of Short Hill Mountain owned property, farmed the land, built a schoolhouse and church in the 19th century, and forged their lives amid some of the darkest periods in American history. Their history is intertwined with that of the Town, their stories buried within the remaining foundations of old log homes that stud the mountain and in a long-forgotten black cemetery alongside Charles Town Pike near the Hillsboro United Methodist Church. This area represents one of Loudoun County's richest in black history.

Forrest Griffith was an enslaved person and owned by one of the oldest and first landowning families in Loudoun County, the McIlhaneys. Emancipated in 1839 by Mortimer McIlhaney, Forrest Griffith purchased 15 acres on Short Hill Mountain in 1847. Other free blacks living in the area before the Civil War included Zilpha Davis, who was a laundress and preacher, silver miner John Burns and a bearded trapper living on the north Short Hill who also did odd jobs for townspeople, known as Hill Tom. The legacies of these individuals have lived on, as Hill Tom shared the spring with the Town in the early 1800s that to this day supplies Hillsboro. The general store has long been known as Hill Tom Market. "Zilpha's Rock," reportedly where Zilpha Davis did her laundry, is still a prominent landmark situated in Catoctin Creek.

Although it was forbidden by law, local blacks in Hillsboro would gather secretly to worship separately from whites just south of Town on the Short Hill at a spot that came to be known as Pulpit's Rock.

Forrest Griffith's daughter Francis, an enslaved person until her father bought her freedom, married Elzy Furr. The Furrs and their three children were registered as free blacks in Loudoun's 1853 Registry of Free Negroes. They purchased a half-acre of land on Short Hill Mountain from Forrest Griffith for one dollar in 1855. The Furrs later sold a portion of that land to the newly formed Asbury Methodist congregation so that a church could be built. At the end of the Civil War, the Hillsboro blacks established their own Asbury Methodist congregation, worshipping at Pulpit's Rock as well as the "white" Arnold Grove church and a log schoolhouse established in conjunction with the Freedmen's Bureau. The Asbury Methodist Church, on Ashbury Road of fieldstone by the congregants in 1887, burned in 2010. Lying beside it is a large, weathered stone that is reputed to be Pulpit's Rock.

The Short Hill schoolhouse and church formed the center of a larger African American community in Hillsboro. Descendants and written records frequently mention family names such as the Furrs, Mahoneys, Gaskins, Ferrells and the Redmans, among others, living on or very near Short Hill Mountain. Many of these families intermarried giving way to a complex web of relations.

The Thomas Balch Library in Leesburg houses Asbury Church records from the late 19th century and early 20th century, which reveal how large and integrated the Short Hill community must have been. The Asbury Church congregation merged with Hamilton's Mount Zion Church in the 1960s. While still standing, the Asbury Church is in a state of serious disrepair.

Fully understanding and appreciating this part of Loudoun's African-American history will involve additional historical research, archaeological excavation around the remaining foundations on the Short Hill and collection of oral histories. Clearly, residential development on the Short Hill would not only have negative environmental and aesthetic impacts, but would irretrievably erase much that history and the ability to explore it.

During the post-Civil War period, Hillsboro began its transformation from a busy commercial center to a primarily residential community. Homes formerly housing taverns, shops and stores gradually became residences. With the turn of the 20th century, virtually all of the existing structures within the Town had been built and little has been altered in the majority of the structures.

Town Historic Assets

Hillsboro is one of the oldest and well-preserved towns in the Washington D.C. area. Surrounded by well-tended farms supporting the agricultural and livestock interests that have characterized the region for the last two centuries. Virtually every home in Hillsboro dates from the 18th or 19th century. They have been, for the most part, well maintained by their owners to ensure their historical integrity. A visitor to the Town has the opportunity to observe a wide range of architecture representing a number of styles and periods, from simple log structures and elaborate stone houses built in the late 1700s to Colonial and

Victorian style homes of the 1800s. However, while retaining their overall visual integrity, the homes of Hillsboro have evolved over the past two centuries, upgraded with the modern times, be it the nineteenth or twentieth century.

To this date, most additions and improvements have not drastically changed the structures' outward appearance. (In several cases, current and prior owners have taken notable steps to restore homes and structures to their earlier or original appearances after previous renovations.) Nor have any of Hillsboro's structures been deliberately demolished or demolished by neglect during the past 30 years.

The 1974 architectural survey supporting Hillsboro's application for the Virginia and National Historic Registers (*see Appendix B*) notes:

By the 1830s Hillsboro had assumed much of its present character. Few changes have occurred in its early 19th-century rural fabric In addition, Hillsboro's linear-strip plan remains intact with three-fourths of the city buildings facing each other along Route 9.

Recognizing the cultural and historical value of Hillsboro's architecture and setting, application was made for and inclusion granted in the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places in 1979, with an expanded designation in 2010 (Figure 1). The Town's current Historic District overlay (Figure 2) is based on the 1979 National Register designation and limited geographically to the Town boundary in place prior to the Town's 2016 boundary line adjustment (Figure 3). The Town uses the list of properties and associated contributing structures found within the 2010 National Register nomination form as its Historically Significant Buildings List. Structures identified on the Historically Significant Buildings List have maintenance requirements found within the Town's Zoning Ordinance and require a Certificate of Appropriateness be issued by the Town before any demolition, moving, or alteration may occur.

Historic District Guidelines were developed in 2010 and are used by the Planning Commission and the Town Council for adjudication of any application requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness. These guidelines are a voluntary guide for changes to the existing structures in Hillsboro whenever new renovations, maintenance, or alteration of the existing architecture and property is planned. It is, in short, a reference document to be consulted by residents, builders, contractors and architects to ensure that the historical character of Hillsboro is maintained for current and future residents of this historic town.

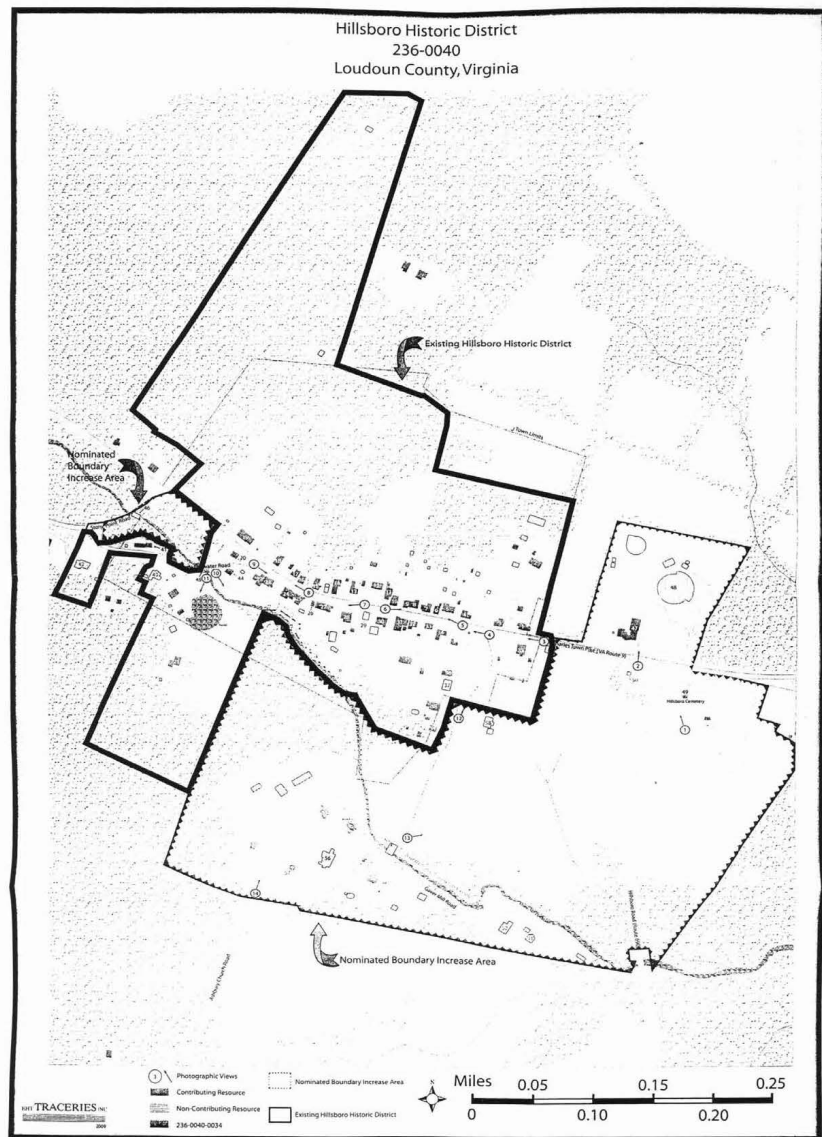
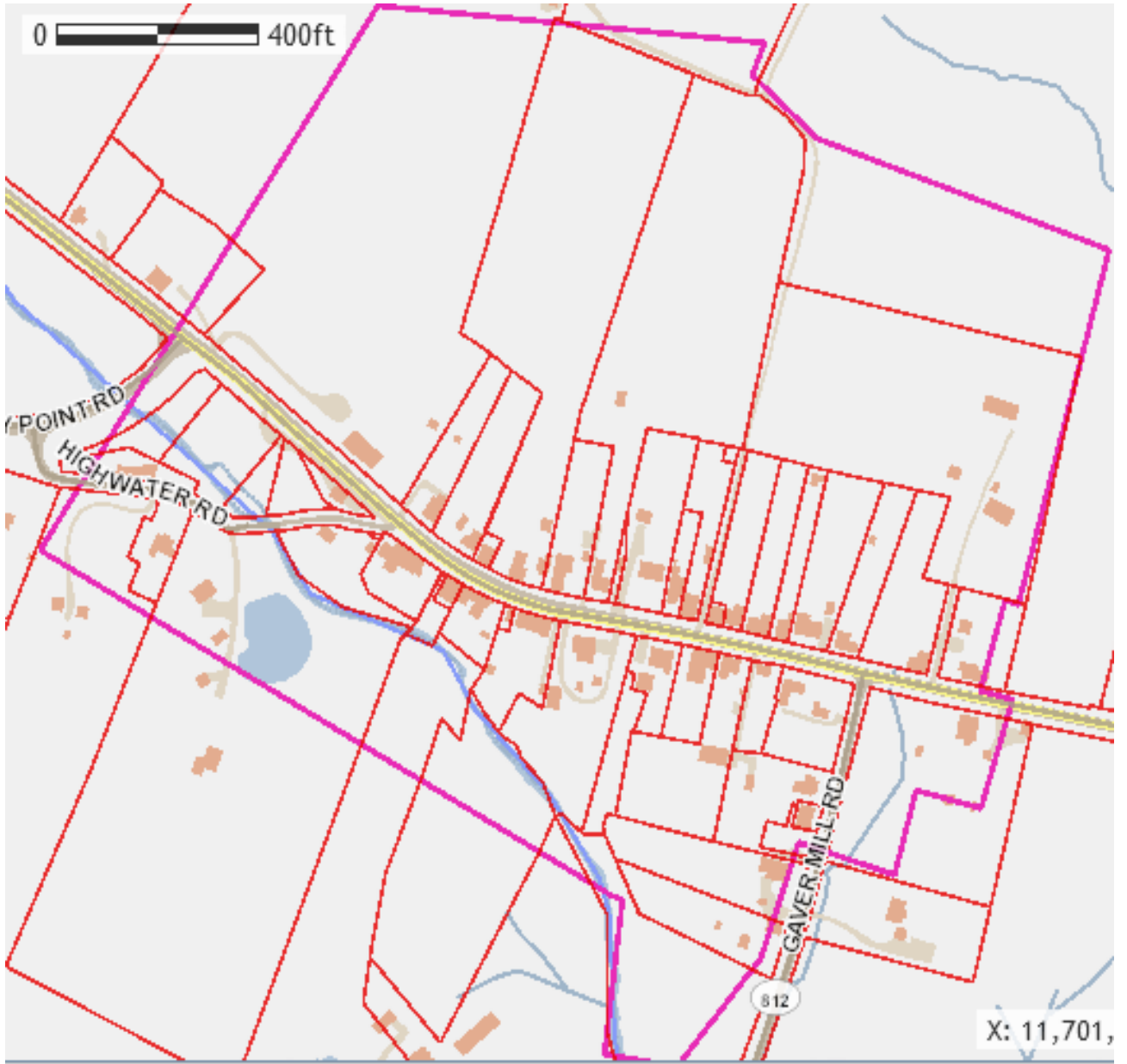


Figure 1: Map of 1979 Hillsboro National Register of Historic Places designation with 2010 boundary increase area.



- Hillsboro Historic District
- Land Parcels

Figure 2: Map of existing Hillsboro Historic District

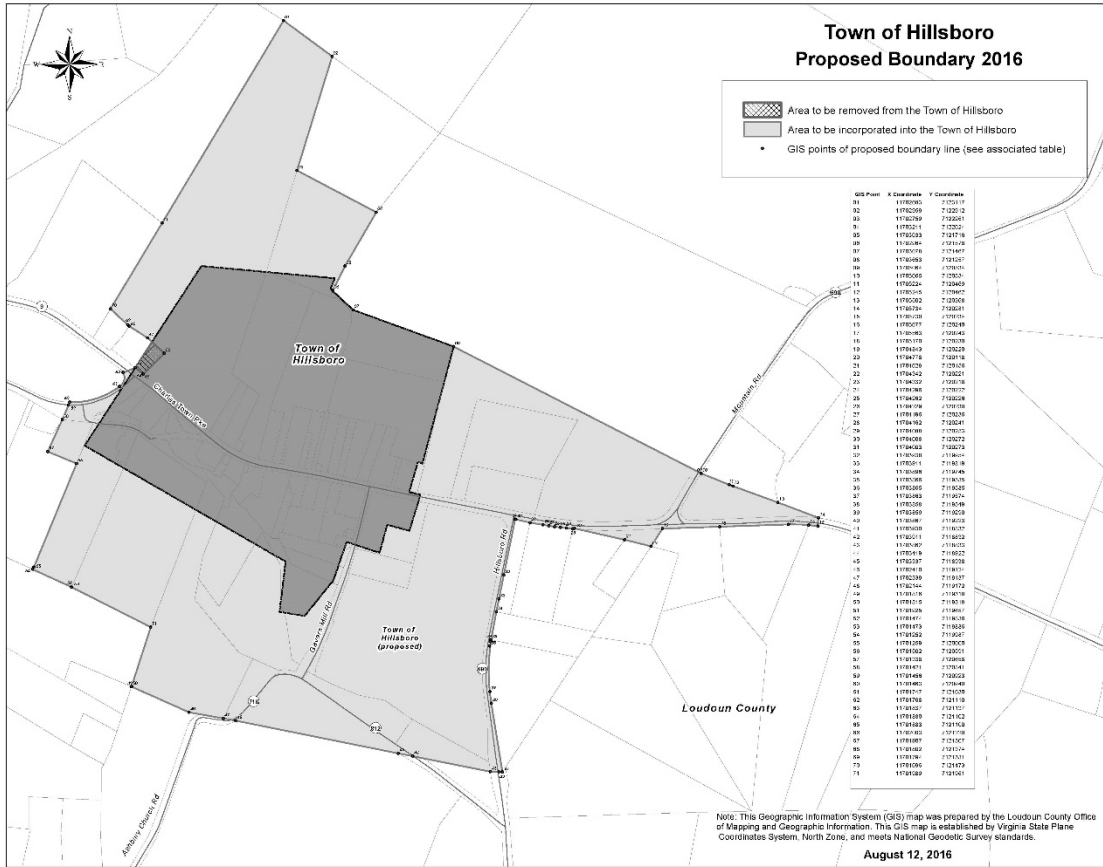


Figure 3: Map of 2016 Hillsboro boundary line adjustment.

GOALS, POLICIES, ACTION ITEMS

GOALS: Maintain the rich historic identity of Hillsboro by preserving and protecting its historical, architectural and archaeological sites.

POLICIES:

1. Ensure the preservation of historic and architecturally significant structures through enforceable zoning measures.
- 2. Ensure the preservation of archaeological sites and historic sites within and adjacent to the Town.
- 3. Maintain and enhance the attractiveness and integrity of the existing historic district.
- 4. Ensure that new construction acknowledges and respects the historic design and land use pattern of the Town.
- 5. Maintain and protect the historic rural setting of Hillsboro, including the adjacent Short Hill Mountain and open approaches to the Town.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Initiate a review and potential update by the Department of Historic Resources of the Hillsboro Historic District.
2. Update the Hillsboro Historic District overlay map to be consistent with the 2010 National Register expanded designation and the 2016 Town boundary line adjustment.
3. Place greater emphasis on use of the Historic District overlay and structures identified on the Historically Significant Buildings List to preserve and maintain the Town's historic attributes.
4. Evaluate whether potentially historic structures brought into Town through the 2016 boundary line adjustment should be included on the Historically Significant Buildings List.
5. Update and evaluate the Historic District Architectural Guidelines, and whether the guidelines should remain voluntary.
6. Evaluate the Zoning Ordinance as to its sufficiency to regulate property owner neglect of historic structures. If deemed insufficient, take action to ensure the

Zoning Ordinance contains measures to permit enforcement of maintenance of structures on the Historically Significant Buildings List. In addition, evaluate whether these measures should be expanded to include non-historic structures.

7. Examine extension of Historic District Architectural Guidelines and Certificate of Appropriateness evaluation criteria beyond a building's public front facades on Charles Town Pike, Gaver Mill, Hillsboro, Stoney Point, and Highwater Roads to ensure preservation of historic buildings and structures and to guide thoughtful design and construction of additions and new structures.
8. Participate in the Virginia Department of Historic Resources Certified Local Governments Program and other appropriate programs.
9. Enhance Town gateways to place special emphasis on and recognition of the Historic District.
10. Actively support the efforts of private individuals, businesses and non-profit organizations to preserve and maintain the historic and archaeological sites of the Town and the surrounding area and to identify historic landmarks.
11. Restore the historic Woodgrove Road Bridge as a pedestrian/multi-modal access bridge connecting the Town's Janney Mill Trail and Charles Town Pike.
12. Identify historical African American communities of the area and their historical contributions.

IV. NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

BACKGROUND

The Town of Hillsboro exists as a result of geological forces rendered eons ago that formed a narrow gap in a steep mountain chain, making this small area of ground heavily traversed by man and beast for thousands of years. The numerous caves in the Short Hills flanking Hillsboro likely served as dwellings for the earliest inhabitants as the climate moderated and game and edible vegetation became plentiful. Today, at each opening of this gap are strikingly beautiful vistas of rolling hills and farmland, set against the magnificent backdrop of the Short Hills and the Blue Ridge Mountains. It is of utmost importance to preserve, protect and respect this sensitive natural environment for reasons including:

1. Protection of the quantity and supply of safe, clean water.
2. Protection of the air quality.
3. Maintenance of natural beauty that is a critical component of community attractiveness.
4. Noise pollution infringes on quality of life and detracts from the rural surroundings.
5. Light pollution emanating from within and outside Hillsboro that robs a valued rural characteristic from the area.
6. Protection of abundant habitat for wildlife.

Climate

The climate of Hillsboro is greatly influenced by its situation in the narrow Short Hill Gap and by the Blue Ridge Mountains to the west and the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic Ocean to the east. Characterized by mild winters and warm, humid summers the climate is classified as “modified continental” by the U. S. Meteorological Service. Mean annual temperatures in Loudoun County average 56 degrees with a record high of 106 degrees Fahrenheit and a record low of -9 degrees. The average temperature in the summer is 73 with a mean range from 62 to 85. There are an average of 45 days each year with a high temperature of 90 or higher. The winter mean is 32 with a mean range from 23 to 43.

Precipitation occurs in all four seasons with the maximum average rainfall in July and the minimum in January or February. The average annual precipitation is 41 inches. Thunderstorm activity occurs on 35 to 40 days each year. Much of the precipitation in winter occurs as snow. Approximately 25 inches of snow falls in the average year, but amounts have varied between 5 and 51 inches. Prevailing winds blow from the southwest, with secondary winds from the north. The mean wind speed is 7.5 miles per hour. Calms occur about 12 percent of the time.

The growing season, defined as the period between the mean date of the last freezing

temperature in spring (April 17) and the mean date of the first freezing temperature in the fall (October 22), is 187 days. Freezing temperatures have occurred as late as May 17 in spring and as early as September 21 in fall. The length of the growing season allows most staple crops to mature adequately, and some vegetable crops may be planted twice in a single season.

Topography, Vegetation and Soils

Hillsboro is tucked into the narrow gap between the Short Hills, which run roughly north to northeast. The Town shares the gap with Catoctin Creek.

Tree species include upland hardwoods such as maple, hickory, tulip poplar and red and white oak. Stands of Virginia pine often mark the poorer soils, whereas the presence of red cedars indicates recently abandoned croplands. The wetlands and floodplain areas contain sycamore, sweet gum, green ash and willow trees as predominant species.

Wetlands are valuable environmental resources, serving as important fish and wildlife habitat and filtering pollutants from adjacent ponds and streams. Freshwater wetlands are typically defined as areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances does support, a prevalence of hydrophytic vegetation adapted to saturated soils. Because of their importance, development in wetland areas is restricted by state and federal law.

Most of the steeper slopes, which coincide with stands of mature trees, cause significant constraints to development. Existing Loudoun County policy discourages development on slopes greater than 15% unless appropriate engineering practices are followed. Development on slopes greater than 25% in highly sensitive environmental areas is permitted only by special exception or with a variance.

Soil Resources

The soils underlying the Town vary across a relatively small geographic area. Soil types support a variety of different habitats, such as wetlands and forests, and agricultural activities within the Town limits. Specific soil types and their locations within the Town are identified in Figure 4 and further described in Appendix C.

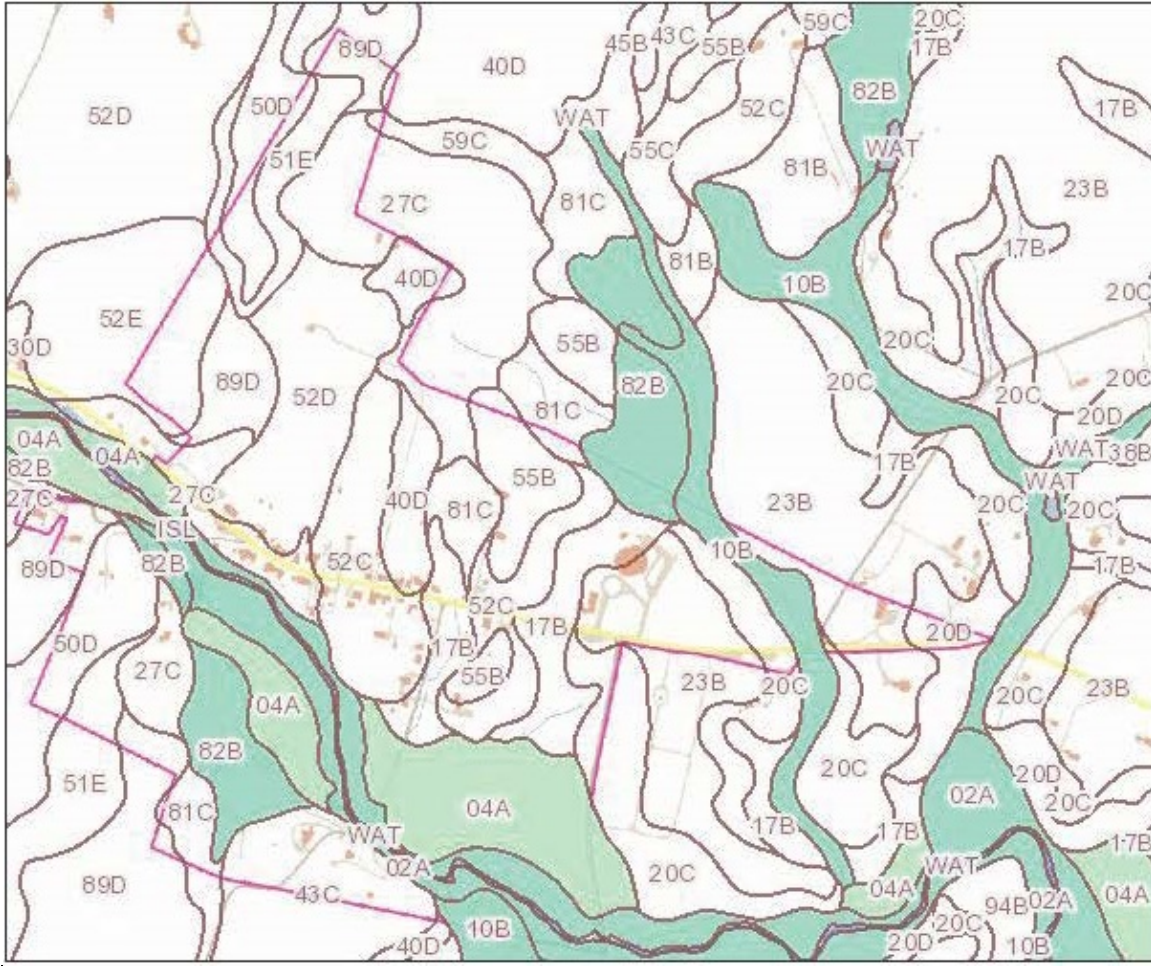


Figure 4: Map of the Town of Hillsboro with soil locations and identification codes (hydric soils shaded)¹

Hydrology/Water Resources

The majority of streams in Loudoun County, including the North Fork of the Catoctin Creek within Hillsboro, drain northeastward into the Potomac River, which then drains into the Chesapeake Bay. Loudoun County has been subdivided further by the State Water Control Board into seven major watersheds. Hillsboro and the surrounding area under the Town’s subdivision control are located in the Catoctin Creek Watershed.

The Chesapeake Bay is home to approximately 3,600 plant and animal species and is the largest estuary in the United States and third largest in the world. Controlling excess nutrients within the Bay’s watershed has been a focus for many years by federal, state, and local officials and communities. Due to excessive runoff of nitrogen, phosphorus, and other pollutants, the Bay’s water quality has been negatively affected along with

¹ Loudoun County, Virginia, WebLogis Online Mapping System, <https://logis.loudoun.gov/weblogis/>, accessed 1/10/2019.

important species such as submerged bay grasses, blue crab, oysters, and fish species.

The Town sits atop geologic formations characterized by “fractures” or underground cavities of various size and depth that contain water. The actual availability of water typically depends on the ability to locate and access these fractures through well drilling. Unfortunately, determining the location of large fractures is an inexact science based on examination of topographical and geographical data. A hydrogeologist can only estimate water supply based on available information.

For nearly two centuries Hillsboro obtained water from Hill Tom Spring located on the north Short Hill Mountain. The spring produces a moderate flow and when the Town experienced droughts it was sometimes necessary to impose water conservation measures on Town residents and businesses. Because of the possibility of potential contamination of surface water in the Hill Tom Spring, it was ordered to be disconnected from the Hillsboro municipal water system. The Town has developed an alternative well location near the North Fork of the Catactin Creek that will serve as the Town’s new water source. The new well and installation of associated infrastructure is anticipated to be completed in 2020, at which time the Hill Tom Spring will be disconnected from the Town system.

Floodplain

A floodplain is an area adjacent to a watercourse or water body that is periodically inundated by flooding. Floodplains are usually defined for the purposes of regulation as the 100-year floodplain, or the area that will be inundated to a defined height by water from a flood that has a one percent chance of occurring in any year. The Hillsboro flood plain is defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and administered by the Town (Figure 5).

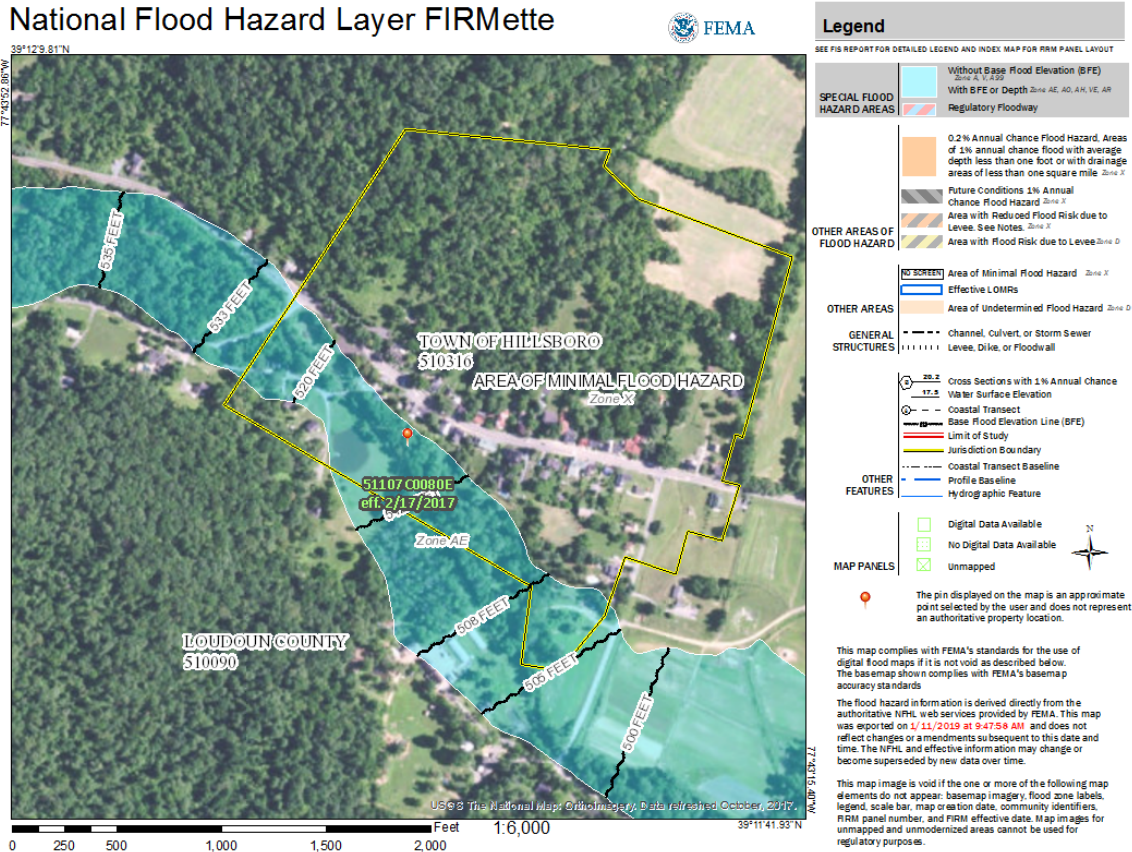


Figure 5: FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer map for the Town of Hillsboro (note: Town boundary line reflects boundary prior to 2016 boundary line adjustment).

Noise Pollution

Highway traffic noise emanating from Charles Town Pike is the primary hazard to the local quiet. While traffic noise is an inevitable consequence of the proximity of dwellings to the roadway, the excessive and virtually incessant volume of traffic has made the noise pollution a perceived health threat. The utilization of Charles Town Pike as a truck route adds to the noise pollution with large trucks rumbling through the Town at high speeds—often at low-traffic nighttime hours—and using engine brakes and downshifting to slow down.

Construction and development in the immediate Hillsboro area brings additional dirt and material hauling truck traffic that at times is extreme. As Charles Town Pike is Hillsboro’s “Main Street,” policies and measures should be pursued that will alleviate the additional noise (and safety) hazards that result from truck traffic. It remains to be seen whether implementation of the Town’s traffic calming measures will reduce the frequency of commercial truck traffic and the associated noise through the community. The Town should evaluate the effectiveness of the traffic calming project in its ability to reduce traffic noise and take appropriate actions as needed.

As the Town completes the traffic calming project and increases the availability of safe pedestrian travel throughout the community, a likely consequence will be the addition of new businesses opening within Town and operating into the evening hours, such as restaurants and special event venues. This mix of residential and commercial activity will require careful consideration of appropriate sound levels generated and the impact on residential properties.

Noise abatement policies and measures should be enacted and enforced to protect the residential community from excesses due to these noise hazards.

Air Quality

While the overall rural setting of Hillsboro would indicate a good quality of air, the volume of traffic traversing through Town and its close proximity to residences poses a threat to health. As some 17,000 vehicles pass through Hillsboro on an average weekday, pollution from those vehicles is palpable, especially during summer days. The air pollution problem in Hillsboro is directly attributable to the traffic volume and gives added weight to the imperative that a solution is found. The congestion mitigation resulting from the traffic calming project is expected to lessen queues and vehicle idling in Town, thus reducing associated air pollution.

Hillsboro should seek to study the quality of its air and get assistance from appropriate agencies in addressing the air quality issues.

Light Pollution

Properly designed outdoor lighting can enhance vision, security, safety, and contribute to an attractive nighttime environment. However, adverse effects of poor nighttime lighting include urban sky glow, glare, light trespass, energy waste, and significant harmful impact on local and migrating wildlife.

Urban sky glow affecting Hillsboro has grown dramatically in the past two decades, alarmingly in the past five years alone.

Within the Town of Hillsboro itself, policies and measures should be implemented that help citizens plan private and business lighting that minimizes light trespass while achieving their goals of providing safety and security. As part of the Town's traffic calming and pedestrian safety project, the Town will integrate state-of-the-art, low intensity lighting along the public ways so as to minimize light pollution and glare.

Energy Management

The Town of Hillsboro was once reliant on power generated within its own borders from the Catactin Creek. Flowing water was the primary means of energy used to power the many mills throughout the town. Today, the Town is reliant on electricity produced from coal or natural gas-powered facilities and oil or propane to heat businesses and residences within its limits. Natural gas is not available to Town residents or businesses because of a lack of servicing pipelines.

Because of the significant age and lack of modern building design of all buildings within the Town, energy efficiency of homes and businesses is inadequate. The challenge of maintaining historic structures with period appropriate materials results in high costs to the Town and property owners and inefficient use of the energy resources of the region.

It is in the Town's interest to explore ways to address energy conservation and innovative technology for public buildings and also to leverage opportunities for residential and commercial properties with grant and subsidy programs. Such technologies could include LED lighting for Town facilities, EV vehicle charging stations, bicycle racks, solar panels on public facilities, and geo-thermal heating and cooling technology.

GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTION ITEMS

GOALS: Preserve and protect the natural environment and resources of the Town and surrounding area, including viewsheds and mountain ridges along and adjacent to Short Hill Mountain.

POLICIES:

1. Preserve vegetation and sensitive environmental features through appropriate Town regulations.
 2. Protect the integrity of the Short Hills, including the gateways entering the Town, and actively promote the conservation of this environmental feature that most defines the Hillsboro area.
 3. Preserve significant open spaces within the Town and the surrounding area.
 4. Promote enhancement of the Town's aesthetic character and improve air quality through preservation of significant natural features, landscaping and tree planting.
- | ~~1.5.~~ Manage, protect and preserve the availability and quality of groundwater and other natural resources.
- | ~~2.6.~~ Preserve and use stream corridors and floodplains for open space.

- ~~3.7.~~ Promote the improvement of air quality and the reduction of noise and light pollution.
- ~~4.8.~~ Promote preservation of steep slopes and existing tree stands in the Town and surrounding area.
- ~~5.9.~~ Promote awareness and voluntary involvement of citizens regarding environmental and natural resource issues, problems, needs and opportunities.
- ~~6.10.~~ Encourage rural agricultural development alternatives to dense residential development of currently open land.
- ~~7.11.~~ Designate and document specific natural features and locations in and around the Town for public open space, such as: bike paths, stream trails, community gardens, wildlife refuges and historically significant places.
- ~~8.12.~~ Protect the North Fork Catoclin Creek corridor and adjacent environmentally sensitive areas.
- ~~9.13.~~ Promote water conservation, recycling and the protection of local wildlife.
- ~~10.14.~~ Promote the protection of vistas within Town and along its outskirts.
- ~~11.15.~~ Promote energy efficiency and conservation initiatives consistent with the Town's historic character, including improvements for Town facilities and residential and commercial buildings.

ACTION ITEMS:

- ~~1.~~ Develop appropriate environmental protections such as stream buffers, limits on clearing and grading on steep slopes, preservation of existing tree stands and limits on the amount of impervious cover permitted.
- ~~2.~~ Establish an electric vehicle charging station within the Town.
- ~~3.~~ Review any proposed development for the purpose of identifying its potential environmental impacts and to ensure adequate open space preservation provisions.
- ~~4.~~ Evaluate and actively promote appropriate processes for open space preservation, such as land trusts, tax incentives for land conservation, open space easements, and the purchase of development rights, within Hillsboro and its environs.
- ~~5.~~ Evaluate potential impacts from proposed lighting during the review of zoning permit applications to aid in diminishing unwanted light trespass and for recommending efficient lighting solutions.

- | **6.** Take appropriate actions to quantify and measure the effects of air and noise pollution on the community and enact regulations to address negative effects.
- | **7.** Identify county, state and federal agencies and private organizations with wetland protection agendas and open appropriate dialogues to utilize such resources to protect the Catoclin Creek wetland area in and adjacent to Hillsboro.
- | **8.** Pursue designation of Tree City status and take actions to improve the Town's green space, such as increasing the tree canopy, encouraging native plant installation, and creating trails.

V. POPULATION AND HOUSING

BACKGROUND

The Town of Hillsboro has maintained a relatively steady population for decades and, because of its already full development and small size, is unlikely to deviate significantly.

Hillsboro’s population was documented as 80 in the 2010 Census and increased to approximately 115 in 2016 as a result of the Town’s boundary line adjustment. Its previous area of 55.36 acres increased to 171.77 acres with the boundary adjustment.

In essence, there is minimal room for growth within the Town limits. Virtually every dwelling in the Town is of 18th- or 19th-century vintage, a significant number of them log and stone construction dating to the late 1700s. While future population growth and home construction in the Town proper is unlikely to be significant, it is important that the surrounding open space and farmland is maintained to ensure Hillsboro’s small town character.

TABLE III-1: HILLSBORO POPULATION TRENDS 1990 - 2017
Compared to Loudoun County

	Numerical Change			
	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2017</u>
Hillsboro	72	96	80	115 ²
Loudoun	86,129	169,599	312,311	398,080

SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of the Census: 1990, 2000, and 2010 Census; 2017 Annual Population Estimate

Population Characteristics

The 2010 Census is the most recent source of information on population characteristics in Hillsboro. Characteristics in Census data include age, sex, race, and disability status. While the population of Loudoun County has increased over four times during the period 1990-2017, Hillsboro’s population shifts are primarily the result of the number of occupants in its fixed number of homes at any given time, and, more recently, the increase in the Town’s geographic area. (See Appendix D for additional Census data.)

Age and Sex. At the time of the 2010 Census, the median age of the Town’s population was approximately 45, compared to 41 years in 2000. The largest single population

² Estimated; includes additional population increase from 2016 boundary line adjustment.

cohort was 40 to 49 years, containing over 26 percent of the population. The largest cohort in the 2000 census was 35 to 44 years at 17 percent. Females comprised 52.5 percent of the population in 2010 compared to 50.6 percent of the 2000 population.

Population with Disabilities. The U.S. Census Bureau collects statistics on non-institutionalized persons with disabilities in two categories—those with mobility limitations and those with self-care limitations. The percentage of the Town’s population that was disabled as of 2000 was 11.4%. In addition, 31.6 percent of the Town’s elderly population (ages 65 or older) has mobility or self-care limitations.

Race. According to Census data, in 2010 whites comprised 81.3 percent of the population, Asians 7.5 percent, blacks or African Americans 1.3 percent, and Hispanics or Latinos 1.3 percent. In the 2000 Census, whites comprised 97 percent of the population, with blacks comprising 3 percent.

Income Characteristics³

The median household income in Hillsboro was estimated to be \$126,563 in 2017, greater than the Virginia statewide at \$68,766 but lower than the Loudoun County figure of \$129,588. Hillsboro’s 2017 estimated per capita income of \$44,108 compares to the state figure of \$36,268 and the county per capita income of \$50,456.

Housing Characteristics

The 2010 Census showed the Town contains 38 total housing units with 32 of the units being occupied. Twenty-six of the units were specified as owner-occupied and six were specified as renter occupied. The population of owner-occupied units was listed as 65 individuals; 15 individuals were living in renter-occupied units.

With the 2016 boundary line adjustment, the number of housing units grew to XX, with XX owner-occupied and X renter occupied.

GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTION ITEMS:

GOALS: Maintain a diverse community of well-preserved homes within a pleasing environment consistent with the historic, close-knit, character of Hillsboro.

POLICIES:

1. Preserve the historic character of the residential areas within the Hillsboro

³ Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Historic District.

2. Ensure that development in the Hillsboro area is compatible with surrounding properties.
3. Ensure through zoning ordinances an appropriate balance between residential and commercial uses and account for potential future demands.
4. Encourage property improvements and housing rehabilitation in keeping with the historic character of the Town.
5. Ensure the Zoning Ordinance includes strong and enforceable measures to prevent property owner neglect of historic structures.
6. Protect the property values of existing homes and properties.
7. Enforce all applicable laws, including zoning and building code regulations, to ensure the maintenance of existing houses and properties, and strengthen these laws where appropriate.
8. Ensure zoning and planning ordinances related to residential housing include consideration of affordable housing needs, such as the availability of long-term rentals within Town.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Strengthen zoning ordinances that ensure the maintenance of residential homes and properties, in order to protect existing property values and protect public health, safety, and welfare.
2. Conduct a bi-annual, voluntary Town Census to ascertain population and demographic data such as age, home ownership and occupations for the purpose of grant applications.
3. Create a community resource guide to provide information to residents related to housing and home improvement needs.
4. Conduct a study of the potential impacts of short-term rentals and the encouragement of affordable housing and propose related zoning regulations.

VI. BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

BACKGROUND

Commerce has been a shaping force throughout Hillsboro's long history. From the second half of the 18th century to the beginning of the Civil War, Hillsboro was key to the region's agricultural economy. Waterpower from Catoctin Creek supported several grain and flourmills, and these supported other related services within the Town such as wheelwrights and coopers. Many, if not most, of the older current residential structures in Hillsboro were actually built as commercial establishments. As a result of the agricultural decline wrought by the Civil War and changes in transportation patterns and food processing, Hillsboro lost the commercial prominence it enjoyed in its antebellum period. Late 19th-century Hillsboro became more residential in nature, and though smaller businesses continued to prosper, these were less agriculturally based.

This residential trend continued into the 20th century as the automobile reduced local dependence on in-Town goods and services. The nature of remaining business continued to shift from the provision of general goods and services such as tailor shops and dry goods to specialty services such as bookstores and antique shops, some of these doubling as residences. Two small gasoline stations existed into the second half of the 20th century.

The venerable HillTom Market, which until 2002 housed the Town's post office, remains one of the largest and most visible commercial establishments in Hillsboro, along with the Stoneybrook Farm Market and Deli, which was incorporated into Hillsboro with the 2016 boundary line adjustment. A second dining establishment opened in 2019, The Market in The Gap, along with a gourmet picnic basket establishment. These businesses are supported by a growing number of Town activities, included numerous Town-sponsored events and activities at the Old Stone School, including a popular summer concert series.

Three bed and breakfast inns are operated in Town along with two cabinet maker shops, an architect office, gunsmith shop and numerous home-based businesses and services. Broadband service became available in 2018 in Hillsboro, providing much needed connectivity for businesses.

The imminent completion of the Hillsboro Traffic Calming and Infrastructure Improvement project will create a fertile environment for a growth in primarily tourism-related economic development and commercial activity, such as short-term rental accommodations and dining establishments catering to area visitors as well as local residents.

Commercial Zoning-Central Business District

Since the advent of zoning, most of Hillsboro has been zoned as residential. However, since the initial Comprehensive Plan was developed in 2004 two areas on the west end of the Town have been zoned Commercial (C-1), with the most prominent active commercial property within this district being the HillTom Market. The old wood frame Post Office building parcel, which for three decades was a commercial property, was also rezoned as C-1 and now is a cabinet workshop.

With the 2016 boundary line adjustment, the largest existing business was incorporated into the Town, located at the east end of Town directly across Charles Town Pike from the Old Stone School. The farm market/restaurant is in the new A-C District. An adjacent property and home, on X acres, has a new market/restaurant.

As the Town implements traffic calming and pedestrian improvement projects, additional opportunities for economic development within Town will materialize. This plan recommends a review and potential revision of zoning districts to accommodate appropriate commercial activities.

Home-based Business

There are multiple home-based businesses in Hillsboro. These offer professional services architectural design, marketing, consulting and trades including carpentry, cabinet making and furniture restoration. The largest of these is an architectural design firm with off-street parking for its several employees.

The others may be generally characterized as being owner operated and it is highly likely that the number of home-based businesses will grow. This type of business activity is positive for Hillsboro for a number of reasons:

- ◆ ■ These activities are ‘transparent’ in that they do not require specialized facilities, signage, parking or Town services.
- ◆ ■ These low-impact services do not threaten the Town’s architectural fabric.
- ◆ ■ Home-based workers keep Hillsboro from becoming a “bedroom’ community.
- ◆ ■ Home self-employment embraces the earlier tradition of entrepreneurial activity.

Hillsboro’s R-1 District currently provides for a wide range of home-based businesses and special uses. This plan recommends a thorough review and update of these provisions and policies to ensure they adequately reflect the current and anticipated state and the goals set forth in this Plan.

Economic Development

Business expansion is an issue that has implications for the Town residents and its government. In recognition of a changed environment within the Town as a result of the successful implementation of the traffic calming and pedestrian improvements projects, the Town should promote a balance of residential parcels with the addition of contextually sensitive and appropriate commerce. Additional commerce within the Town will help to serve the needs of the Town and area residents and help to promote the attractiveness of Hillsboro as a destination for tourists. In particular, it is critical the Town encourages appropriate small businesses that expand the Hillsboro's tax base to ensure the economic viability and sustainability of the Town and to lessen the burdens borne primarily by homeowners.

The Town should be proactive in its efforts to implement policies and practices consistent with encouraging economic development within the Town, including the use of zoning practices, such as overlay zoning or mixed-use designations, that would permit appropriate commercial activity on some currently residential properties. This plan supports the development of advisory bodies, such as an Economic Development Authority, to support, advocate, and encourage local businesses within Town.

The Town should carefully evaluate its existing Zoning Ordinance and propose revisions consistent with this Plan. Revisions to the Zoning Ordinance should evaluate the appropriateness of any necessary architectural alterations for commercial buildings, hours of operation, noise limitations, signage, tax rates, availability of off-street parking, and the need for increased services such as water and sanitary sewer. The Town should also establish commercial infrastructure connection rates for water and sewer services.

Tourism

The Town of Hillsboro is located in the center of one of the Commonwealth's fastest growing tourism regions, which has seen extraordinary expansion and diversification in the past decade. Within minutes of Hillsboro is the largest concentration of wineries, bed and breakfast inns, farm breweries and farming operations in Loudoun County. A number of the most acclaimed and well-established vineyards in Virginia are on the outskirts of the Town and drive an ever-growing number of visitors to the area, as does the nearby Appalachian Trail. Adding to the existing attractions of viticulture, vistas, recreation and history, the newest Virginia State Park is soon to be developed just west of Hillsboro.

The historic Town is itself a potent destination with its well-preserved architecture and its uniquely authentic 19th-century character and appearance. With the completion of the Town's Traffic Calming and Infrastructure project—which will create a pedestrian-safe environment and include contextually appropriate materials and burial of all aerial utilities—Hillsboro will offer visitors an extraordinary experience worthy of its motto “Where History Lives.”

With the infrastructure and aesthetic improvements, Hillsboro is poised to usher in a new era that offers the opportunity for it to regain its traditional role as the hub to the surrounding agricultural region by complementing and providing supportive services to the agritourism businesses.

Tourism presents an opportunity for the Town to leverage its infrastructure investments to ensure long-term fiscal sustainability, improve quality of life for residents and enhance property values—while preserving and honoring the historical integrity of Hillsboro.

GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTION ITEMS:

GOALS: Facilitate appropriate business and employment opportunities within Hillsboro that enhance the community and its quality of life in a manner consistent with the Town’s historic and rural setting and are sensitive to environmental concerns.

Promote businesses that can help guarantee the financial sustainability of Hillsboro and are compatible with the character and scale of the Town.

Support and encourage traditional farming and agricultural operations on the open lands within and surrounding the Town.

Protect the surrounding farmlands and viewsheds that are imperative to preserving the historical context of the Town and to ensuring its unique attractiveness critical to agritourism.

POLICIES:

- | ♦1. Promote a balance of residential parcels with the addition of appropriate commerce.
- | ♦2. Create innovative zoning that permits adaptive, appropriate commercial uses on residentially zoned properties.
- | ♦3. Encourage appropriate small businesses that will expand the Town’s tax base to ensure economic viability.
- | ♦4. Encourage uses of properties for alternative business models and opportunities including “pop up” markets.
- | ♦5. Prevent commercial uses within the Town’s that have a negative visual impact and detract from its historic character.

| ●6. Ensure that proposed businesses do not over burden the Town’s existing infrastructure.

| ●7. Be proactive in working with Loudoun County, the state and adjacent communities to enhance the Town’s ability to influence future business developments in the vicinity of Hillsboro.

ACTION ITEMS:

| 1. Evaluate the existing Zoning Ordinance and propose revisions consistent with this Plan.

| 2. Establish an Economic Development Authority to promote appropriate economic development in the interest of furthering the goals of the Town.

| 3. Establish commercial connection rates and fees for water and sewer services.

| 4. Increase Hillsboro’s visibility within the county and state through alliances with tourism, environmental and preservation organizations.

| 5. Pursue county, state, federal and private funding to make improvements to benefit residents and visitors alike, such as bike trails, historical markers, public art installations, view shed land purchase, or purchase of development rights.

VII. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

For most of its history the Town of Hillsboro has provided few services or infrastructure for its citizens beyond its drinking water system, which included the Town spring, storage tanks and distribution system. With the multifaceted road and infrastructure project currently underway, the Town's range and scope of services is expanding. Likewise, the Town-owned Old Stone School is in the midst of rejuvenation and revitalization as a key cornerstone to community building and enrichment, requiring strategic planning that will ensure continued success and sustainability.

Key Community Assets Summary

In the past decade, the Town has taken ownership of the in the Old Stone School, built in 1874 as the Locust Grove Academy and now serving as the Town Hall, community center, event venue and rental facility. Adjacent to the Old Stone School is the Hillsboro Charter Academy, a community-run public charter school. Public safety is provided by a number of professional and volunteer organizations. Street maintenance within the Town limits is provided by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). Solid waste and recycling is managed through a contract the Town has with a trash disposal service. Sewerage and wastewater treatment and disposal are the responsibility of individual property owners, however the Town's Traffic Calming and infrastructure improvement project will see the installation of sanitary sewer mains and laterals for a future municipal wastewater treatment system.

Hillsboro Old Stone School

Hillsboro's Old Stone School remained outside of the Hillsboro Town limits until 2016 when the property was brought into the Town through a boundary line adjustment. The building now houses the Town's municipal offices as well as hosting numerous community events and meetings and is rented for a variety of regular and special events. church services and is regarded as a key Town institution and landmark. The building and property is owned and operated by the Town, with funding for operations and routine maintenance derived from rentals, event revenues, donations through the Old Stone School Preservation Trust and the Town's general fund. The Town has also been successful in securing substantial capital improvement funds from the Loudoun County Capital Improvement Program.

Town investments in improvements to the facility are ongoing and are intended to ensure the facility becomes self-sustainable and remains a vital institution for the Town. This plan recommends development of a five-year strategic plan to achieve long-term sustainability.

Postal Facility

U.S. Postal service in Hillsboro dates from 1804 when it was among the first Postal stops in the young United States. Some 90 years later, a purpose-built Post Office was built in the center of Hillsboro and remained operational until the late 20th century. A contract postal facility was then located in the HillTom Market until it was closed in 2002. The closure of the Post Office was not a popular decision, but no alternative location existed at the time. Hillsboro residences were assimilated into the Purcellville Post Office and subsequently were assigned “Purcellville” addresses. In 2018, the Town and the U.S. Postal service negotiated an official USPS database change that made “Hillsboro” the preferred city name within the 20132 ZIP Code for mail addressed to Hillsboro and a 40-square mile area of Northwest Loudoun.

Since the closure of the central post office, mail within Hillsboro has been Rural Free Delivery and residents have individual post boxes located on the street. The traffic calming project design will not accommodate street mailboxes, and the project includes construction of an aggregated mailbox facility on Town property, or if appropriate within an existing structure or private business.

It is within the vision of the town for this location to represent the qualities and functions that the Hillsboro Post Office or facility performed in the past. The “new” Post Office should serve as more than simply a place to which mail is delivered. It could also serve as a place to house other activities such as a Tourist Information Center for the town and the greater Western Loudoun region, a meeting place for town residents and more.

This plan recommends a Town initiative to reestablish a Hillsboro Postal facility as either a Town-managed operation or as a public-private venture. It is in the interest of the Town to either purchase property to serve this purpose or to build a structure dedicated solely for this purpose on property currently owned by the Town.

Hillsboro Charter Academy

Adjacent to the Old Stone School is the Loudoun County Public Schools’ Hillsboro Charter Academy (HCA). Previously the Hillsboro Elementary School, the distinctive “round” school building was built in 1966 and served pupils in grades kindergarten through fifth grade from the surrounding area until 2015. The school property was brought into the Town through the 2016 Hillsboro boundary line adjustment. The potential closing of smaller elementary schools in western Loudoun in favor of consolidation into new, larger buildings drew vociferous opposition from local residents. Exercising a recently initiated “charter school option,” parents and local citizens developed and successfully created a tuition-free public charter school offering a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) curriculum, open to students from across Loudoun County.

The Hillsboro Charter Academy (HCA) opened in the fall of 2016 and has since its opening won several state and national awards and was recognized in 2018 by the Loudoun Times-Mirror as the top public school in its annual Best of Loudoun series. The HCA is currently at its capacity with approximately 135 students in grades kindergarten

through fifth grade, and a wait list of nearly 200. The stated mission of HCA is to incorporate an innovative curriculum focused on STEAM education and true project-based learning (E-3) that helps each child to develop and grow. HCA’s approach is designed to promote critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity.

Because of the community-run aspect of HCA and the direct involvement of Town officials in the creation and ongoing operations of the school, the relationship between the school and Town have never been stronger. The HCA bylaws require the Hillsboro mayor be a permanent member of the Board of Directors.

While enrollment at HCA is governed through the school’s Enrollment Policy and conducted via lottery, the HCA Enrollment Policy gives consideration to Town residents. More specifically, the Enrollment Policy states:

*The ongoing relationship between HCA and the Town of Hillsboro is evident in the combined campus and shared dedication to the concept that the school is a fundamental element of a thriving town. In recognition of that fact, children who reside within the historic district, as defined by the legal town boundary, will be placed first among those in the geographic preference subgroup.*⁴

This plan commends the Town to continuing to foster close cooperation and a strong partnership with the Hillsboro Charter Academy to ensure its long-term sustainability and viability.

Public Safety

Public safety is provided by a number of professional and volunteer organizations. Police protection is provided by the Virginia State Police and the Loudoun County Sheriff Department. Fire protection and rescue services are provided by professional and volunteer departments in neighboring communities including Purcellville, Hamilton, Lovettsville, Neersville and Round Hill. Hillsboro supports such organizations with annual contributions from the Town treasury.

Future Town-Owned Facilities

Roads, Sidewalks, Appurtenances

Street maintenance within the Town limits is provided by VDOT. The roads maintained by VDOT include Charles Town Pike, Hillsboro Road, Mountain Road, Gaver Mill Road, Highwater Road, and Stoney Point Road and Ashbury Church Road. Spring Lane, which serves as access to the Town’s Drinking Water Treatment Plant and is used by six abutting residences, is not maintained by VDOT. The Town has the responsibility of maintaining Spring Lane. Upon the completion of the traffic calming project and because

⁴ The geographic preference subgroup is further defined in the Enrollment Policy as: Children who reside within the 2015-2016 Hillsboro Elementary School (“HES”) attendance area (as defined by the Loudoun County Public School system (“LCPS”)) or whose residence is closer by vehicle to HCA than any other elementary school in LCPS, shall be designated to be in the “priority geographic zone” and will be granted special status in the lottery.

the Town has selected some special materials the Town will have the shared responsibility of maintaining some of the facilities, including the sidewalks, curbs, trails, signage landscaping and street lighting fixtures. The Town will acquire as part of its project an inventory of special materials to have available for repairs and replacements.

Streetscape Care and Maintenance

With the completion of the Town's roadway and pedestrian improvement project, additional maintenance requirements will be necessary. These will include services such as snow removal from sidewalks, maintenance of lighting systems, clearing of storm water drains, and replacement or repair of damaged signs and other roadway and sidewalk components (e.g. pavers, railings, curbs, etc.). The Town should develop policies and define roles and responsibilities for residents to ensure proper maintenance of the roadway, sidewalks, and other common areas within the Town. Advanced procurement and storage of materials to ensure repair and replacement of damaged components is conducted in a timely manner is recommended. A storage facility for procured materials will need to be developed. The Town's should work with VDOT in developing procedures and policies for roadway snow removal and street cleaning. Landscaping along the roadway and in common areas is also encouraged, in particular the planting of native trees to maintain and increase the tree canopy within the Town.

Solid waste is managed through a contract the Town has with a local trash disposal service. Trash pickup is once a week, with monthly billings sent to each resident along with the water bill.

The Hillsboro Drinking Water System

The water system of Hillsboro has been an important part of its development through time, being the first gravity water system in Loudoun which served the Town for over 175 years. In more recent past, it was the subject of state-wide concern when a bad sample was found in the Hill Tom Spring. The Town system has for more than two decades been operating under a Consent Order requiring disconnection from the Spring.

The Hill Tom Spring on the north side of Short Hill Mountain was the Town's primary source of drinking water until 2002, when a well was drilled near the system's storage tanks. However, the well production was not sufficient enough to allow the Town to disconnect from its spring and attempts to drill additional nearby wells were unsuccessful. There are currently 31 water system connections, mostly residential. The remaining residences supply their own water via well or spring on their property.

In cooperation with the Virginia Department of Health and Loudoun County, the Town conducted an area-wide hydrogeological study in 200? that located potential well locations inside the Town boundaries. Subsequently, the Town has designed a new

drinking water system with adequate capacity to serve the entire population when completed and allowing permanent disconnection from the Hill Tom Spring. The project is expected to be fully completed in late 2020.

The drinking water system improvements constitutes a major investment in Hillsboro and brings with it a higher level of facilities responsibility and fiscal responsibilities. As such, the Town must create and implement policies that ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the system and long-term operations, maintenance and replacement planning.

The cost of maintaining a viable system remains an important point of discussion. As in the past, the supply of water will remain a factor in the development of the Town for future residents and businesses.

Ultimately, as the municipal system is required by state statute to have a plan to service all residences, and the new Hillsboro system has been designed to do so, the Town's desire is for all residences to be in the system in the future. While the Town will encourage and incentivize all residences to join the system at the outset, it will not require connections. However, this Plan recommends the establishment of a Hillsboro Real Estate-based Utility Tax assessment to be levied on all property—whether a part of the system or not—to ensure the burden of the community-wide system is shared by all.

A workable financial plan will be needed to make sure that the Town can effectively provide water service to all residents. Several options are foreseeable: 1) all residents are required to hook up to the new system. This will be more valuable for residents who are currently using a private well when a solution to wastewater has been identified (many individual drain systems are on the brink of failure) 2) the creation of a “utility district” into which all residents must pay, whether or not they are hooked up to the system, 3) revised tax system (raised property tax and increased meal and cigarette taxes) to help provide additional funds.

Wastewater Management

The Town of Hillsboro does not have a public sanitary sewer system. All wastewater management within the Town is the responsibility of property owners and includes on-site wastewater treatment facilities such as traditional septic tanks with drainfields, approved alternative systems or “pump and haul” holding systems. Many of these systems are approaching the end of their useful life, failing, or contributing to environmental issues that may be impacting public health and water quality. Small lot sizes (the median parcel area of 0.68 acres) preclude replacement of the majority of existing drainfields. The Town estimates that only 12% of the current facilities are less than 15 years old and 60% have had more than 30 years in operation, which is the typical life expectancy for such systems.

In recognition of the potential health and environmental threats of failing private systems, the Town secured funding from Loudoun County for design and installation of a sanitary sewer force main and laterals as part of the underground utility work included in the Traffic-Calming and Pedestrian Safety Project.

In 2016 Loudoun County funding supported a feasibility study that evaluated options for a community wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal system. The alternatives evaluated in the study included a wastewater treatment plant with subsurface disposal, a wastewater treatment plant with surface water disposal, and a pump station with a connection to. Subsequent technical analysis has determined the connection to the Town of Purcellville to be unfeasible. Before a community wastewater management solution is implemented, the Town will need to identify the most appropriate and cost-effective treatment alternative and secure the necessary funding for installation and maintenance. The Town should make the identification of a community wastewater management solution and its implementation a priority.

GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTION ITEMS:

GOALS: Protect and ensure the long-term sustainability of the Old Stone School as Town Hall and community center.

Protect public health and safety with a safe, reliable and fiscally sustainable drinking water system.

Protect public health and the environment by providing a community wastewater treatment system.

Establish a community postal facility to serve residents.

Maintain a strong partnership with the Hillsboro Charter Academy to ensure its long-term viability.

POLICIES

1. Ensure the long-term fiscal sustainability of the Hillsboro Water System and its ability to provide safe drinking water to all residents and businesses.

[5.2.](#) Extend Municipal Drinking Water service to all residences and businesses.

[6.3.](#) Restrict new private wells within the Town limits.

[7.4.](#) Permit no disconnection from the Drinking Water system by existing customers.

[8.5.](#) Provide a municipal wastewater treatment system that is accessible to all residences and businesses.

- ~~2.6.~~ Establish/review water rates every five years to ensure alignment with cost of system.
- ~~3.7.~~ Ensure the long-term fiscal sustainability of the Town's municipal building, The Old Stone School.
- ~~4.8.~~ Ensure the establishment of a postal facility to serve Town residents.
- ~~5.9.~~ Safeguard and ensure the long-term maintenance of Traffic-Calming and infrastructure facilities and materials.
- ~~6.10.~~ Maintain and ensure ongoing collaboration and mutual support between the Hillsboro Charter Academy and the Town of Hillsboro.
- ~~7.11.~~ Expand Town-owned property where and when feasible in support of community uses and facilities.
- ~~8.12.~~ Encourage and enable the display of local art in public facilities and promote the performing and cultural arts for the enrichment of citizens.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Create a fiscal long-term plan for the Hillsboro Water System and establish equitable, sustainable rate structure and connection fees for residences and businesses.
2. Provide incentives for conversion from private residential wells and springs to the Town Water System.
3. Create regulations restricting the drilling of new private wells within the Town.
4. Initiate a two-year action plan for the design and construction of a Town Wastewater Treatment Facility.
5. Work with the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development program to secure funding for a Wastewater Treatment Facility.
6. Develop a five-year strategic capital improvements and fiscal sustainability plan for the Old Stone School.
7. Develop an infrastructure repair and replacement fund related to the maintenance needs of new facilities, including sidewalks, streetlights, trails, and landscaping. Update the Town's Zoning Ordinance to specify responsibilities of property owners in the maintenance and care of common areas adjacent to their property (e.g., snow removal from sidewalks).
8. Establish a joint Town of Hillsboro-Hillsboro Charter Academy planning committee to review long-term needs and areas of cooperation between the two entities.

9. Identify and secure a space or property to function as a postal facility/community activity center.

VIII. LAND USE

BACKGROUND

The land in Hillsboro is dedicated primarily to 18th- and 19th-century stone, clapboard, log and stucco homes, assorted barns, outbuildings, a former church and a few small commercial establishments. The majority of the properties and their residences are of pre-Civil War construction and were oriented to the main thoroughfare that bisects the Town, with relatively narrow frontages and deep lots. A plat of the Town's lots dating from the mid-18th century is nearly identical to one from the early 21st century.

In 1835 the Hillsboro population was reported to be 172 with some 30 dwellings and three mercantile stores and an academy. Fifty years later the population had decreased to 135 but the general composition of buildings remained the same. The final two decades of the 19th century saw the last building boom in the Town, with new houses replacing old or being constructed on the remaining available lots.

The rolling countryside immediately northwest and southeast of Hillsboro is almost exclusively rural and accommodates cattle farms, dairy farms, horse farms, vineyards and other agricultural enterprises. Rising precipitously on the northeast and southwest of the linear Town are the steep and heavily wooded Short Hill Mountains, part of the foothills of the Blue Ridge. A few long-established and a handful of recently constructed residences are now found on the southern Short Hill, while there exists only one home on the immediate north slope. However, a century ago a small African American community inhabited the southern slope, with a schoolhouse and church (still standing). Ruins of long-abandoned houses are still found along the mountain roads of the northern slope. *(See Chapter IV and V for more detailed descriptions of the Town's historic assets and natural resources.)*

This Comprehensive Plan recommends a study to update and possibly expand the Hillsboro Historic District to consider inclusion of properties and structures incorporated into the Town in 2016 and lands on the Town's outskirts that comprised the historic African American communities and enslaved people's burial grounds.

This Plan strongly recommends continued land uses that are harmonious with the Town's rural setting and will encourage the retention of open spaces and of the existing viewsheds on all sides of the Town. With completion of the Hillsboro Traffic-Calming project and the advent of a walkable, accessible history-rich community, Hillsboro's growing appeal as a destination and the likelihood and desirability of appropriate and contextually scaled commercial activity is greater, prompting the need to carefully review the Town's zoning and subdivision regulations. The Plan recommends policies to maintain the Town's diverse residential, commercial, and agricultural activities and an appropriate balance that is compatible with the Town's rural and historic character.

The Town's 2016 boundary line adjustment nearly doubled Hillsboro's land area, with most of the land in agricultural use or forested. Beyond those lands, nearly all of the lots

within the Hillsboro Town limits are developed, occupied by an existing structure, primarily residential in nature. The Town comprises approximately 171.77 acres within the corporate limits.

Figure 6 illustrates the current Hillsboro zoning districts.



Figure 6: Existing Town of Hillsboro zoning districts.

Residential Vision Within Hillsboro

It being the desire of the community, Hillsboro should continue to exist as a historic residential community of predominantly single-family, detached homes. Its future residential evolution should strive to remain true to what the National Register of Historic Places survey recorded in 1974:

A 19th-century rural town site, Hillsboro exists in an above-average state of preservation. Though traffic, on-street parking, cement sidewalks, and telephone wires indicate the shift from the 19th to the 20th century, these later additions appear without major conflict with the established 19th-century period appearance. The town's salient features include the informal placement of buildings reflecting 19th-century evolutionary growth patterns, the lack of a formal street plan, the extensive use of natural field stone in construction, and a rural setting in a richly wooded area. Combined, these features impart to Hillsboro a calm and intimate air.

This Plan recommends the study and consideration for strengthening the Hillsboro Historic District Design Guidelines.

These guidelines should not impair nor prohibit homeowners from making changes that are in keeping with the Town's historic, diverse and evolutionary vernacular. New construction on existing lots, or to existing houses or businesses, should be carefully designed to protect and perpetuate the traditional visual character of the Town. It is critical to the preservation of Hillsboro's historic heritage that the scale and appearance of additions or improvements be compatible with the Town's existing atmosphere. Activities that would modify resources listed on the National Register of Historic Places designation or the Town's Historic Buildings List should continue to be subject to the Historic District Design Guidelines and the appropriate zoning permit review procedures.

Hillsboro's current Residential Zoning District (Figure 6) is intended to accommodate single-family detached residential uses within the Town, with reasonable ancillary commercial uses that support the "live, work, play" concept consistent with the existing pattern of the Town. The district permits single-family attached or detached dwellings and home occupations. The Residential District also conditionally permits some non-residential uses (after obtaining a special use permit), including libraries, schools, utility facilities, and other Town Council approved commercial uses. Several dwellings on some parcels within the Town have been utilized as a bed and breakfast for short-term (less than 30 days) rentals. These parcels are currently zoned in the Residential District.

The Zoning Ordinance allows a bed and breakfast as a home occupation (*see* § 10-5) in the Residential District but does not further specify if other short-term rentals are allowed. The Zoning Ordinance also identifies bed and breakfast and rooming and boarding houses as a permitted use in the Commercial District and a bed and breakfast as a special exception use in the Agricultural-Conservancy District.

In light of the past and expected continued use of residential properties as short-term rental opportunities, including bed and breakfast establishments in a primary dwelling and rentals in accessory buildings, this plan recommends that these uses should be considered as a subordinate use under the Residential Zoning District and that properties used for a bed and breakfast or other short term rental should be owner or resident occupied in keeping with the residential character of the district.

As the properties and buildings within Hillsboro have historically been utilized for both residential and commercial uses, this Plan recommends Hillsboro modify the Zoning Ordinance to allow for additional commercial uses for permanent residents occupying property within the Residential District, to provide business opportunities for residents of the Town.

Hillsboro's history was built on a mixed use of Town property where property owners lived within Town and established businesses, such as mills, general stores, medical offices, taverns, and tanneries on their property. While the nature of the commercial uses within Town have changed over time—and with the improved pedestrian accessibility arising from the Traffic-Calming and Pedestrian Safety project—the mixed-use zoning structure remains a key element for ensuring Hillsboro's residential and commercial sustainability.

Modification of the Zoning Districts could be accomplished through the addition of a “mixed-use overlay” and/or modification of the Residential District permitted uses to provide for greater flexibility in the type of commercial uses of the property. In keeping with the residential character of the district, such commercial uses should be subordinate to the residential use of the property.

This Comprehensive Plan also recommends modifying the Residential Zoning District to better align with property boundaries where possible and appropriate to eliminate situations where a single parcel is split between two districts, particularly for those parcels brought into the Town through the 2016 boundary line adjustment and partially zoned Agricultural-Conservancy. In addition, revision to the Residential District should account for and maintain the traditional use of the land and consider its suitability for residential use, such as consideration of how the land has been traditionally zoned or if the parcel lies within a floodplain.

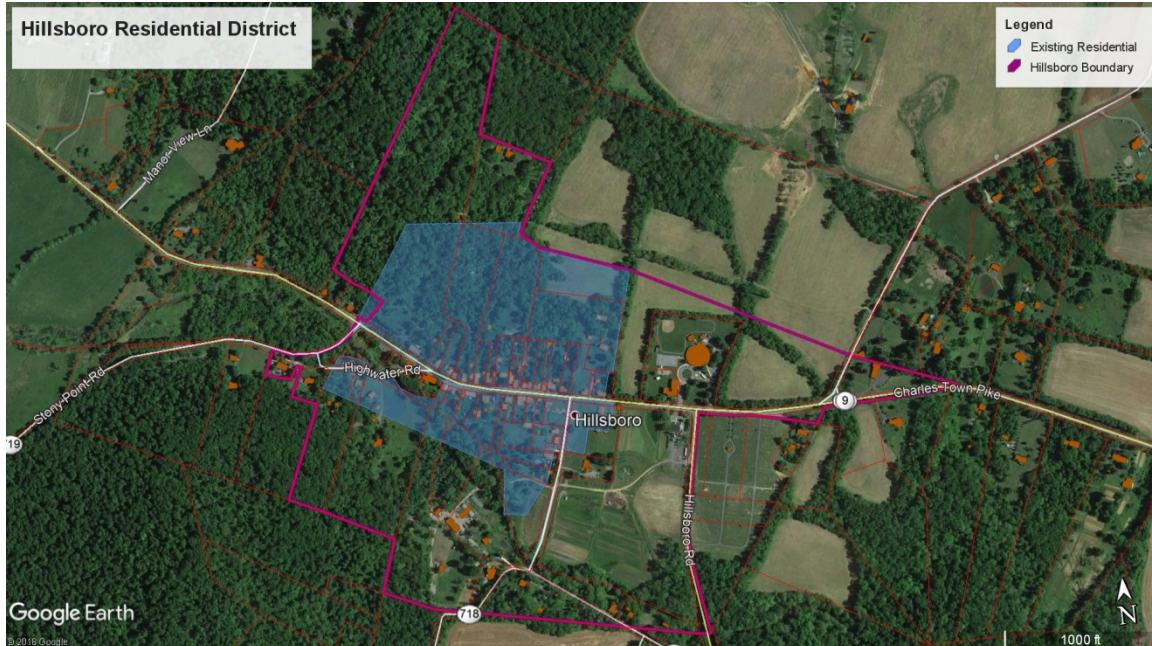


Figure 7: Existing Residential District within the Town of Hillsboro.

Commercial Vision Within Hillsboro

Hillsboro presently has two areas zoned as Commercial Districts. One includes several parcels on the western edge of the Town and one parcel is designated Commercial in the center of Town (Figure 7). The existing Commercial Districts are situated in what has been for the past 100 years, the traditional commercial area of Town at the west end of Charles Town Pike in Hillsboro.

The Commercial District is designed to allow appropriate commercial uses that offer goods and services consistent with and supportive of the primary residential uses within the Town. Commercial uses in this district will be located in new buildings or buildings which were formerly residential, but which may be more desirable for commercial activities because of higher traffic volumes or other market factors. It is Town’s preference that existing residential buildings be adapted to commercial use rather than have new buildings constructed, whenever possible. Newly constructed commercial buildings are to be designed to be compatible with the existing historic buildings within Town.

With the advent of a walkable, accessible, history-rich community and Hillsboro’s growing appeal as a destination and hub to the surrounding agritourism activities, the likelihood—and desirability—of appropriate and contextually-scaled commercial activity is greater, prompting the need to carefully review the Town’s zoning districts. Key to this review will be the implementation of policies and planning that ensure a proper balance between residential and commercial activity within the Town and be responsive to potential future demands.



Figure 8: Commercial Districts within the Town of Hillsboro.

Agricultural-Conservancy Vision within Hillsboro

The 2016 boundary line adjustment brought additional property into the Town, most of it being open space consisting of flood plain and/or steep slopes and agricultural lands, some of which have been permanently preserved through conservation easement. All of the parcels or portions thereof brought into the Town limits through the boundary line adjustment were zoned in the Agricultural-Conservancy District (Figure 8).

Because of discrepancies in official maps, prior to the 2016 boundary line adjustment several residentially zoned parcels had small portions lying outside the pre-2016 boundary. Those small portions subsequently brought within the Town in 2016 were designated, for administrative purposes, as part of the Agricultural-Conservancy (A-C) District. The Town’s intent was to—with the completion of this Comprehensive Plan revision—recommend the rezoning of these small portions of predominately residential parcels as Residential.

A number of parcels brought into the Town were existing residential properties with single-family homes. These parcels were also designated A-C, with the Town’s intention to rezone as Residential (R-1).

The small number of parcels or partial parcels that were brought into town and contain more than 10 acres may offer opportunities for uses not currently permitted in the A-C district. This Plan recommends careful examination of the permitted uses in the A-C district and consideration of expanded uses consistent with the promotion of agritourism opportunities.

The Agricultural-Conservancy District is currently designed to accommodate low-intensity horticultural and agricultural uses within the Town and to maximize and preserve areas of open space. The district provides for residential development ancillary to agricultural uses and certain low-intensity non-residential uses that would maintain the majority of open space in these areas, while accommodating uses that would complement and enhance the historic character of the Town. It is intended that uses in this district will be designed in a manner that:

- (a) Conserves open land around the Town's periphery, including those areas containing historic resources or sensitive natural features such as woodlands, steep slopes, streams, floodplains and wetlands, by setting them aside from development;
- (b) Accommodates and promotes agritourism, agricultural and horticultural related business operations
- (c) Protects productive agricultural soils for continued or future agricultural use and conserves blocks of land large enough to allow for efficient farm operations;
- (d) Reduces erosion and sedimentation by the retention of existing vegetation;
- (e) Provides for the maintenance of open land within the Town, which can help to provide opportunities for recreation, public-access trails, protect scenic and historic views, minimize the visual impact of new development, and preserve the historic rural setting surrounding the Town;
- (f) Accommodates certain low-intensity public or institutional uses; and
- (g) Promotes a hard edge marking the transition from the historic village limits to the surrounding countryside.

Open space and productive farmland is crucial to the Town's comprehensive planning effort, for it forms the basis of the rural character and identity of the Town and the surrounding countryside. Open spaces reflect the agricultural heritage of the region and serves as the context for agritourism, while forming and preserving the scale and place for popular historic sites. Open space is a critical resource that plays a large role in maintaining the sense of quiet that is integral to the quality of life.

Open spaces are also home to a variety of land and water-based wildlife in diverse and large concentrations. Deer, squirrels, snakes, coyote, mice, salamanders, bats, red foxes, cotton tail rabbits, chipmunks, bears, box turtles, the endangered painted turtle and a great number of migratory birds call this space home. This wildlife is critical to the local ecosystem and serves as a gauge with which to measure its health.

This Plan recommends that all areas of the Town that are environmentally sensitive should be preserved through easement, dedication or other means. Protecting endangered species that claim these lands as their homes will contribute to initiatives to prevent further sprawl and residential development on the outskirts of Hillsboro.

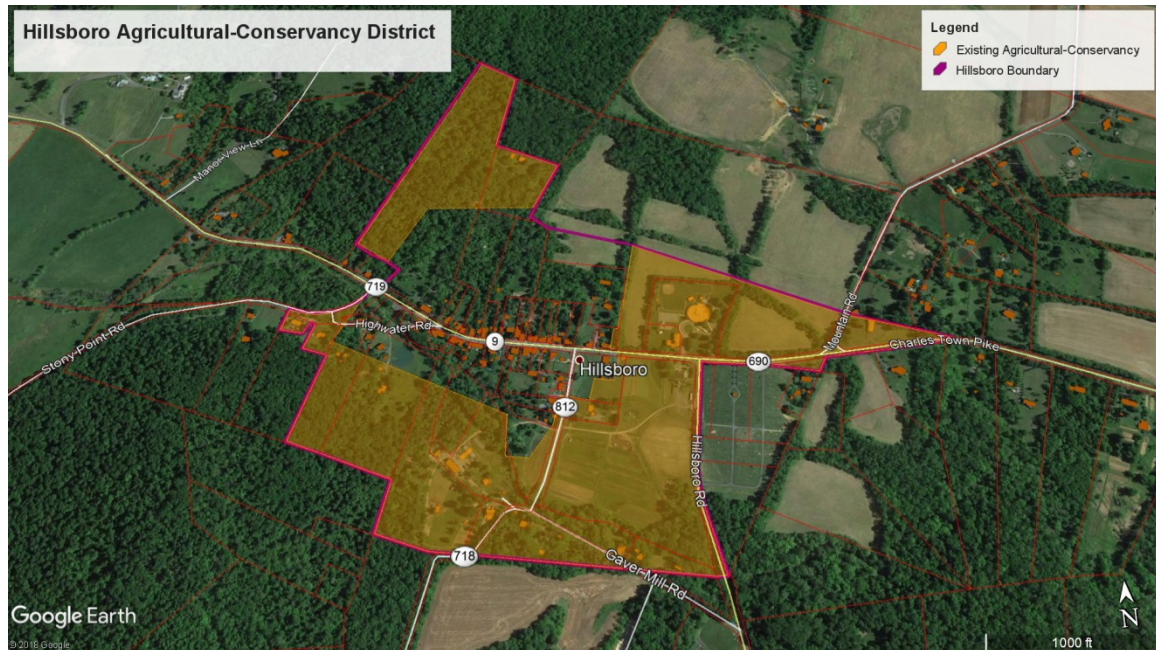


Figure 9: Agricultural-Conservancy Districts within the Town of Hillsboro.

Vision for Area Immediately Surrounding Hillsboro

Given the historical pattern of 18th- and 19th-century village development that saw a concentration of residences in close proximity on small lots, the preservation of open space within the Town limits is not sufficient to protect and retain the historic character of Hillsboro. The Town existed and grew to serve the surrounding agricultural region. Its several mills were critical to processing crops grown on neighboring farms. The Town's tradesmen, retailers and professionals serviced the needs of the surrounding populace.

The Town has no direct control over land use policies outside its tightly drawn boundaries. In order to preserve the cherished historic appearance of the Town itself, Hillsboro's government and citizens must work proactively with Loudoun County and citizen action groups to encourage the maximum preservation of the open, agricultural spaces. A high priority of the Town must be preservation of area viewsheds, of that area which is visible from within the Town and the entrance corridors on the east, west and south of Town.

Beyond preserving the Town's immediate viewshed, the Town must actively encourage viable economic alternatives to sprawling residential subdivisions. The Town endorses rural preservation policies adopted by County Board of Supervisors in the County's

revised 2019 Comprehensive Plan. The Town strongly supports the efforts of individuals, trusts and other public and private organizations in the implementation of conservation easement acquisition and purchase of development rights programs for the rural lands surrounding Hillsboro. The Town of Hillsboro endorses and urges implementation of the Coalition of Loudoun Towns 2019 Blueprint. (Appendix.....)

Future Zoning and Subdivision

Hillsboro’s zoning regulations should continue to emphasize residential use with sufficient flexibility to provide for compatible commercial and agritourism growth in support of the Town’s economic needs and the goals of this Plan. Careful consideration for rezoning individual parcels to the Commercial District may be necessary in the future as Hillsboro completes its Traffic-Calming and Pedestrian Safety Project and the commercial viability of particular parcels increases.

Any rezoning of parcels to the Commercial District should carefully consider the specific attributes of the parcel and its suitability for commercial use, such as, but not limited to, available parking, pedestrian and motorized traffic, compatibility with the Town’s historic character, and potential impacts on adjacent Residential District properties (e.g., from noise, lighting), Town water supply, and wastewater system.

The Plan recommends the careful study of the existing zoning ordinance subdivision limits and permitted uses for the Agricultural-Conservancy District in support of continued agricultural, horticultural and agritourism use and open space within Town. Rezoning portions of existing A-C zoned parcels to allow for commercial opportunities may be considered where appropriately located, such as portions of parcels located adjacent to other residential or commercial properties.

GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTION ITEMS:

GOALS: Ensure land-use plans that will retain Hillsboro’s historic, small-town character in a rural setting and accommodate appropriate and contextually scaled commercial and agritourism activity.

Play an active role to ensure, where development does occur beyond the Town limits, that every effort is made to achieve results consistent with the objectives of this plan.

POLICIES:

1. Maintain the Town's diverse residential, commercial, and agricultural activities and ensure an appropriate balance compatible with the Town’s rural and historic character.

2. Maintain the Town’s historic and residential attributes, and preserve pedestrian and motorized safety.
3. Ensure new construction and renovation are compatible with existing structures and the Town’s historic district guidelines.
4. Ensure commercial uses are compatible with the Town’s historic character.
5. Protect and maintain viewsheds from within Hillsboro and on the approaches to Hillsboro.
6. Protect, preserve and promote the productive agricultural uses of farmland.
7. Encourage area-wide conservation easement efforts and cooperative planning with Loudoun County to limit residential development of adjacent farmlands and protect open space in the area beyond the Town limits..
8. Cooperate with Loudoun County to limit development of commercial establishments on the Route 9 corridor that are inconsistent with the traditionally rural and agricultural character of the area.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Conduct a thorough review and revision of the Hillsboro Zoning Ordinance consistent with the policies adopted in this Comprehensive Plan.
2. Update the Town Zoning map consistent with this Plan.
3. Evaluate the 2016 Town boundary expansion implications on properties with split zoning.
4. Revise the Residential District as necessary to permit—with limitations that maintains a strong community—the use of owner- or resident-occupied dwellings and accessory structures to be used as a bed and breakfast or other short-term rental.
5. Review and revise as appropriate Agricultural Conservancy District regulations to provide for agritourism opportunities
6. Initiate a study for potential expansion of the Hillsboro Historic District.
7. Initiate a study for potential strengthening of the Hillsboro Historic District Guidelines.

IX. TRANSPORTATION

BACKGROUND

Hillsboro's history and development is largely influenced by being on a strategically important transportation route. While that position originally was an engine for growth, prosperity and progress. Historically, traffic through Hillsboro was welcomed as it meant business, commerce and trade. However, over the past half-century it placed the viability and livability of Hillsboro in jeopardy, as the volume of traffic virtually overtook the Town and became the greatest negative to living in the Town.

At the dawn of 2020, a massive transformation is in progress as the Town's Traffic Calming, Pedestrian Safety and Infrastructure project is underway, with the intent to reclaim Hillsboro's historic "Main Street," creating a safe vehicular and pedestrian environment, and once again reaping the positive benefits from the Town's strategic location on an important transportation route.

Development of Charles Town Pike

Hillsboro is often defined by its relationship and proximity to Charles Town Pike, the Town's "Main Street." Historically, Charles Town Pike was an American Indian trail that became known as Vestal's Gap Road after colonists signed the Treaty of Albany with the Iroquois in 1722, which opened the Piedmont of northern Virginia to European settlement and limited Indians to hunting land west of the Blue Ridge.

For the next 100 years, Vestal's Gap Road was the principal route from northern Virginia through the Blue Ridge Mountains to Ohio and points west. It was traveled by many notables from early American history. Major George Washington used the route in 1753 to deliver a letter from the Governor of the Colony of Virginia to the French military forts in southwestern Pennsylvania. A year later, the 23-year-old Colonel Washington marched through with 120 militia men to Fort Duquesne near Pittsburgh for an ill-fated confrontation with the French. Later, Washington traveled Vestal's Gap Road on a trip to Ohio to locate bounty land for officers who had served under him in the French and Indian War.

Vestal's Gap Road remained a primary route for northern and western commerce into the early 19th century, but its role was being eclipsed by the larger, better maintained Leesburg and Snicker's Gap Turnpike, a toll road linked to Georgetown Pike at Dranesville. The Leesburg Pike essentially cut the Hillsboro route out of the lucrative shipment of agricultural goods from the Shenandoah Valley, primarily wheat, to Alexandria. Not to be outdone, the Hillsborough and Harpers Ferry Turnpike Company was chartered in 1848. However, the Civil War put an end to the development of the Hillsboro Road as a strategic commercial route and Hillsboro became even more isolated when the route for a new rail line from Washington to the west followed a path to Hamilton, Purcellville and Round Hill.

These circumstances played a large role in slowing the pace of change in Hillsboro, which has maintained its mid-19th-century appearance to an extraordinary degree.

During the Civil War Hillsboro experienced only a few skirmishes but the road through the Town was a major route for soldiers and materiel from both the Northern and Southern armies. Clearly, the road witnessed considerable Civil War activity and, it can be argued, its history before, during and after the Civil War warrants consideration as a significant historical landmark, possibly designation as a Historic Road district.

In the 1930s, the system of roadways in the Commonwealth of Virginia began to become the responsibility of the state. Towns such as Hillsboro formally turned over control of roadways passing through their limits, to the state.

The 1930s also saw a cooperative effort between the Town and the federal Works Progress Administration that produced many of the stone retaining walls located at the west end of Hillsboro. The Town provided the stone and the WPA provided the labor.

During the last 70 years, Charles Town Pike has been paved and repaved many times, its travel lanes widened. This resulted in the virtual elimination of a unified sidewalk system and in many locations no sidewalks at all. Shoulders and space for parking of vehicles along the road are also sporadic in nature.

Portions of Route 690 (Hillsboro and Mountain roads) and Route 719 (Stony Point Road) lie within the Hillsboro Town boundary.

Other minor roadways within the corporate limits of the Town (Figure 9), which was expanded via a boundary line adjustment in 2016, include Gaver Mill Road (Route 812), which is entirely within the Town limits, intersects with Route 9, and a portion of Ashbury Church Road, which intersects with Gaver Mill Road.

Stony Point Road intersects with Charles Town Pike on the west end of Town. Highwater Road (Route 863, originally Woodgrove Road now Stony Point Rd.) intersects with Stony Point Road and provides access to homes that are on the south side of Catoctin Creek and dead ends at the historic truss bridge.

Spring Lane, a one-lane gravel road, runs north from the center of Town to Hillsboro's water treatment facility, approximately three-tenths of a mile from Route 9. This road also provides access to the northern slope of the Short Hill below the Hill Tom Spring.

Hillsboro Road (Route 690) provides two-lane paved access to the Town of Purcellville. Route 690 also provides northbound access on Mountain Road into a network of rural roads servicing the eastern slopes of Short Hill Mountain. On the west end of Town, Stony Point Road (Route 719) provides additional southern and western access to Hillsboro, connecting to a network of rural roads. Unpaved Ashbury Church Road (Route 718) provides southern access to homes built on the slopes of Short Hill Mountain, most

of which are outside Hillsboro's corporate limits. These narrow and partially unpaved roads into and out of Hillsboro do not provide practical alternatives for commuting traffic, as they do not provide a means to circumvent the Town.



Figure 10: Roads within the Town of Hillsboro.

Hillsboro's Developmental Relationship to Charles Town Pike

As was the custom in the 18th and 19th centuries, Hillsboro's homes and businesses were built in a linear fashion alongside the roadway, with Catoctin Creek in the backyards of those on the south side of the road and the northern Short Hill rising behind those on the north side. In the age of the horse and wagon and even into the mid-20th century and its automobiles, the mostly light traffic was little cause for concern for the Town's residents. Few could have foreseen the dramatic shift in employment patterns and the acceptance by thousands of workers to travel long distances to and from work each day.

Charles Town Pike and all of the roads in the Town of Hillsboro were conveyed by ordinance to the Virginia Transportation Commission in 1930. State Route 9 is one of three main routes of access into Loudoun from points west and north. Route 9 runs northwest from its intersection with the main east-west artery, Route 7, just west of Leesburg. Route 15 is Loudoun's primary north-south highway, intersecting with Route 7 in Leesburg. From the West Virginia state line to Route 7, the Virginia portion of Route 9 is 13.08 miles.

In the late 20th century, Route 9 became a major commuter connector for thousands who reside in the area of Charles Town, Martinsburg and Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, as well as areas just across the Potomac River in Maryland, and work in the

Leesburg/Fairfax/Metropolitan Washington region. Large residential developments have been built in the areas of Loudoun north and west of Hillsboro and across the border in West Virginia. These developments are attracting residents who are employed in the fast-growing technical and service sectors of Loudoun, Fairfax and Greater Washington, and who are trading a longer commute for more affordable housing.

Recent Actions Related to Route 9

After nearly two decades of planning, the Town’s Traffic Calming and Pedestrian Safety project is underway and slated for completion in 2021. The project scope directly responds to the goals established in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan. Among the project details are:

- 1. Single-lane roundabouts situated at each end of Town to create a smooth steady flow of traffic, mitigate congestion and control speeds;
- 2. Sidewalks on both north and south side of Route 9;
- 3. Six crosswalks, three of which are raised, serving as traffic-calming elements;
- 4. More than 50 designated, safe on-street parking bays;
- 5. a system of multi-modal trails (GapWay, Gaver Mill, Janney Mill) allowing for safe pedestrian access to all homes and community facilities;
- 6. Town-owned, LED dark skies, street lighting;

While traffic-calming and congestion mitigation will alleviate much of the traffic problems that Hillsboro has experienced over the past several decades, the volume of traffic through Hillsboro will continue to be source of concern. In addition, as the Town develops its commercial activity so as to create a viable and sustainable economic future, adequate parking will be an issue that must be addressed by the Town.

GOALS, POLICIES, ACTION ITEMS

GOALS: Provide safe and adequate transportation—both vehicular and pedestrian—throughout the Town, while protecting and enhancing the historic character of the Town.

Expand upon the Town’s multi-modal trail and sidewalk system to provide safe pedestrian access to all citizens within Hillsboro and to link directly to a county network of trails.

Develop plans to provide adequate parking to accommodate anticipated growth in commercial and agritourism related activities.

POLICIES:

~~7.1.~~ Ensure future commercial developments provides adequate parking and pedestrian access.

~~8.2.~~ Ensure all Hillsboro residents have safe pedestrian access.

~~9.3.~~ Reclaim Charles Town Pike as Hillsboro’s “Main Street.”

~~10.4.~~ Actively work with Federal, State, Regional, County and local governments on measures that will alleviate traffic hazards and improve safety on the entire Route 9 corridor.

~~11.5.~~ Actively pursue restrictions on commercial thru-truck traffic through Hillsboro and the length of Charles Town.

~~12.6.~~ Encourage and actively support county-wide multi-modal trail projects and its connection to Hillsboro.

~~13.7.~~ Support efforts to make Hillsboro a “hub” for hiking and biking trails throughout the region.

~~14.8.~~ Create a unique walking experience for residents and guests and provide benches, walking tours, fruit and gardens along public walkways.

~~15.9.~~ Promote Hillsboro as bicycle friendly.

~~16.10.~~ Promote the use of electric vehicles.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Establish on-street parking policies for residences that do not have existing off-street parking.
2. Restore the historic Highwater Bridge as a pedestrian/multi-modal access bridge with access to adjacent trails and Charles Town Pike.
3. Provide adequate locking stations for bicycles.
4. Develop multi-modal trails extending the length of Gaver Mill Road and on Hillsboro Road within the Town boundary.
5. Encourage and actively support county-wide trail projects.

6. Study and propose commercial thru-truck restrictions on the Route 9 corridor.

- ~~1.7.~~ Develop a plan for adequate off-street public parking.

- ~~7.8.~~ Encourage the establishment of an electric vehicle charging station in Hillsboro.

APPENDIX A

Hillsboro Town Council Comprehensive Plan Review Guidance

APPENDIX B

National Register of Historic Places Architectural Survey of Hillsboro (Excerpts)

NOTE: The following is a transcription of the National Register of Historic Places Application

***National Register of Historic Places Nomination
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, DATE***

Description

Framed by gently rolling farmland and hilly areas of trees to the east and west and by thickly wooded mountains to the north and south, the early 19th-century rural town of Hillsboro rests in a small gap at the base of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The linear town stretches along a moderately busy two-lane highway (Route 9), with the town center located to the west. The center is defined by a cluster of two- and two-and-one-half-story residences, a post office, a former Methodist Episcopal Church, and an early 20th-century gasoline station/grocery store. Approaching the town center from the east, lot sizes and setback lines diminish as buildings tightly group together.

Local field stone is used extensively in construction and is employed for a variety of building types including residences (236-1, 236-27), commercial buildings (236-20), churches (236-24), barns (236-21), and miscellaneous outbuildings (on site of 236-35). (The preceding four- and five-digit numbers and those to follow refer to the buildings described in the included inventory). The use of stone construction promotes a sense of uniformity in color, texture, and mass to disparate buildings erected during the span of over one hundred years. In addition, the use of local field stone in construction provides a strong visual link between the buildings and the surrounding environment. The town's visual integrity is enhanced by stone retaining walls extending up to six feet in height and lining the highway. Nineteenth-century frame buildings (occasionally having stone chimneys with brick stacks) all exist within this fabric, providing contrast and establishing secondary patterns of color, texture, and mass (236-12, 236-13).

In addition to the major thoroughfare, there are two side streets. Town Route 812 (T812), located at the east end of the village and perpendicular to Route 9, is a narrow village road defined to the west by late 19th- and early 20th-century two- and two- and one-half-story frame dwellings. Here, houses painted soft colors of yellow, peach, gray and white are set back 25 to 30 feet from the street and are fronted by either a hedge, retaining wall or informal plantings. Town Route 812 is defined to the east by fields and one 20th-century brick dwelling (ca. 1970 not within district's boundaries).

The second minor street is Town Route 719 (T719), a small country road which forks off Route 9 at the west side of town. This one-lane drive leads to one commercial establishment located in an early 19th-century store barn and two 19th-century frame dwellings. A one-story, mid-20th-century, frame, single-family dwelling is also located on this road. Though breaking from the traditional forms and details found elsewhere in the district, this latter building in its color and scale does not detract from the rural streetscape.

Current land use within the district is residential with only a few commercial buildings. Of the 43 buildings surveyed in Hillsboro, five are commercial, one is public (post office), and the remaining 37 are single-family residences. Commercial structures include a gasoline station, a gasoline station/grocery shop, a C&P Telephone building, and a television repair shop. An antiques shop occupies the stone Methodist Episcopal Church South, which was erected in 1858.

A 19th-century rural town site, Hillsboro exists in an above-average state of preservation. Though traffic, on-street parking, cement sidewalks, and telephone wires indicate the shift from the 19th to

the 20th century, these later additions appear without major conflict with the established 19th-century period appearance. The town's salient features include the informal placement of buildings reflecting 19th-century evolutionary growth patterns, the lack of a formal street plan, the extensive use of natural field stone in construction, and a rural setting in a richly wooded area. Combined, these features impart to Hillsboro a calm and intimate air.

Statement of Significance

Located in a gap of the Short Hills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, Hillsboro is a typical early 19th-century, northern Virginia farming town. Settled by Bucks County, Pennsylvania, Quakers during the latter half of the 18th century, the town grew in a linear fashion along a minor trade artery connecting Leesburg, Virginia, and what is now Charles Town, West Virginia.

Originally called "The Gap," in 1802 the town was legally established by an act of the Virginia General Assembly under the name of Hillsborough. The city retained this name when incorporated in 1880, though shortly afterward the name was abbreviated to Hillsboro.

A 19th-century bicorporal community, Hillsboro fulfilled institutional and economic services for nearby farmers. These services included the provision of governmental, religious, and later, educational facilities, a town doctor, and the availability of merchants, blacksmiths, tanners, wagon makers and others. In addition, as Hillsboro was located on a minor trade route, its early agrarian economy was moderately supplemented through services extended to travelers.

By the 1830s the town had grown to be a minor manufacturing and business center. Joseph Martin's *New and Comprehensive Gazetteer of Virginia and the District of Columbia* reported in 1835:

Hillsboro contains 30 dwelling houses, 3 mercantile stores, 1 Methodist house of worship, 1 Academy, 2 four manufacturing mills, 1 tavern, and a temperance society. The mechanics are a tanner, saddler, boot and shoe manufacturer, tailor, hatter, cabinetmaker, 2 wagon makers, and 1 blacksmith. Population 172 persons; of whom 1 is a physician.

Fifty year later, *Hardesty's Historical and Geographical Encyclopedia* (1883) noted that Hillsboro contained "137 inhabitants with two churches, Methodist-Episcopal and Methodist-Episcopal South. Two free schools, one white and one colored. There are four general stores, one flour mill, one woolen mill, and numerous shops." This 20 percent decrease in population parallels demographic trends through most of Loudoun County following the Civil War and reflects the movement of formerly enslaved individuals from rural to urban centers. Population remained constant through the remainder of the 19th century and into the 1920s. In 1970 Hillsboro's population was 135.

By the 1830s Hillsboro had assumed much of its present character. Few changes have occurred in its early 19th-century rural fabric. Unlike most Virginia town trustees, civic leaders in 1802 did not lay off land parcels according to a gridiron plan. Lots on the north side of Main Street (now Route 9) were laid off with a uniform length, yet with irregular widths. The resulting lot sizes tend to be narrow and deep. Lots on the south side of Route 9 are wider, though not as deep. These irregular lot sizes continue today.

In addition, Hillsboro's linear-strip plan remains intact with three-fourths of the city buildings facing each other along route 9. The original 19th-century roads leading from Route 9 to Purcellville and to areas north of town have been only slightly altered.

Hillsboro is presently composed of 43 buildings, 21 of which date prior to 1835. While most early structures retain much of their early 19th-century period appearance, Victorian porches (236-9, -12, -18, -25) and frame additions (236-1, -7, -25, -31) indicated a desire to be current with architectural styles popular in urban centers. Most, if not all, of these late 19th-century additions and alterations are builder and catalogue designs. The most sophisticated of these are the attractive porch additions at 236-25. These front and side porches, as well as the house end gables, contain delicate jigsaw work, and while they are tame compared to more elaborate urban examples, their Eastlake details are relatively ornate for Hillsboro. The Victorian wood details here and on other early houses of Hillsboro pleasantly contrast in color, texture, and mass with the heavy gray stone walls of the house. In addition, the irregular Victorian details on porches and/or gable ends play with the simple symmetry and balance of the earlier stone core.

Most pre-1835 buildings in Hillsboro are of stone construction. In general Hillsboro's stone houses are double-pile buildings of random rubble construction, two and two-and-one-half stories in height, topped by a gable roof. Interior or exterior end chimneys of stone (236-5, -15, -16, -19, -23, -25, -27, -30, -33) or stone with brick stacks (236-3, -6, -12) are present. Houses occasionally contain two small windows symmetrically flanking the chimney in the gable end (236-5, -7, -10, -15, -25, -27). Facades are three and four bays in width with a balance or symmetrical arrangement of wall openings. Both central-hall and side-hall plans are employed.

Regional interpretations of the Federal styles are noted through such "Classical" details as the stone quoins at 236-16, -7, -17 and -33 (first floor only) and large stone window heads at 236-7, -16, -19, and -27.

The one brick Federal town house in Hillsboro (236-8) was undoubtedly one of the area's more prestigious homes. The cost of this two-story, three-bay, center-hall town house located near the center of the village most likely increased due to the expense of importing brick to the area.

The remaining houses of Hillsboro are late 19th-century, single-family dwellings and indicate a minor building flurry between 1890 and 1915. (236-3, -11, -13, -14, -17, -26, -28, -35, -38, -39). Most are two-and two-and-one-half-story frame builder/speculative houses.

Historically, Hillsboro has only minor significance, most of which relates to Civil War activities. Located on a travel route of growing importance, troops often passed through the town en route to military camps in Leesburg and Arlington. During the Antietam Campaign of 1862, General John G. Walker moved his soldiers through Hillsboro to Loudoun Heights. Following Gettysburg in July 1863, General Meade brought his soldiers through the town. One year later, in July 1864, following Major General Jubal A. Early's Washington Campaign, Major General George Crook arrived in Hillsboro to lead Union troops in pursuit.

In addition to the town's role during the Civil War, residents take pride in claiming Hillsboro as the birthplace of Susan Koerner Wright, mother of Wilbur and Orville Wright, inventors of the airplane.

APPENDIX C

Soil Characteristics

Summary of soil characteristics and use potentials found in Hillsboro, Virginia.⁵

Mapping Unit Number, Name	Soil Characteristics	Mapping Unit Potential Subclasses For Selected Uses		
		General Development Central Water and Sewer	Conventional Septic Tank Drain Fields	Agricultural Forestry and Horticultural
Slope,		Depth to Rock		USDA Land use capability class
Flooding Potential,				
Hydrologic Group				
2A Codorus silt loam, (0-3%) occasional flooding, (C)	Very deep, moderately well drained brown and mottled brown and grey silty soils with seasonal water tables on level terrace positions in the flood plain; developed in alluvium of mica-bearing soils derived from crystalline rock	IV F - very poor potential; subject to flooding depth to hard bedrock is generally greater than 6'	IV - very poor: flooding potential	II – secondary cropland 3W
4A Hatboro loam, (0-3%) frequent flooding, Hydric soil (D)	Very deep, poorly drained dominantly gray silty or clayey soils with seasonal water tables on concave terrace positions in the flood plain; developed in alluvium of mica-bearing soils derived from crystalline rock	IV F - very poor potential; subject to flooding depth to hard bedrock is generally greater than 6'	IV - very poor: flooding potential	IV – grassland agriculture 4W
10B Mongle loam, (0-7%) brief ponding, (D)	Very deep, somewhat poorly drained brown and mottled brown and gray loamy to silty soils with seasonal water tables in concave drainageway positions; developed in alluvium and local colluvium from mixed acid and basic rock	IV W - very poor potential; prolonged high water table depth to hard bedrock is generally greater than 5'	IV - very poor: landscape position and prolonged high water table	IV – grassland agriculture 4W
17B Middleburg silt loam, (1-7%) (B)	Very deep, well drained yellowish-brown to brown loamy soils with intermittent seasonal water tables in concave upland positions (swales); developed in recent colluvium of soils derived from mixed acid and basic rock	III W – poor potential; short duration water tables depth to hard bedrock is generally greater than 5'	IV - very poor: landscape position and short duration water tables	I – prime farmland 2E
20C Purcellville and Tankerville soils,	complex of very deep, well drained yellowish-red silty Purcellville and moderately deep well drained, yellowish-brown loamy soils on convex	II R – fair potential; depth to rock depth to hard bedrock is	II - fair potential: depth to rock	II – secondary cropland 3E, 4S

⁵ Loudoun County Virginia, Interpretive Guide to the Use of Soils Maps Loudoun County, Virginia, 2000, <https://www.loudoun.gov/DocumentCenter/View/104560/Interpretive-Guide-to-the-Use-of-Soils-Maps---Loudoun?bidId=>.

(7-15%) (B/C)	upland positions; developed in residuum weathered from mixed granite gneiss and metadiabase rock	generally greater than 6' in Purcellville and greater than 30" in Tankerville		
20D Purcellville and Tankerville soils, (15-25%) (C)	complex of very deep, well drained yellowish-red silty Purcellville and moderately deep well drained, yellowish-brown loamy soils on convex upland positions; developed in residuum weathered from mixed granite gneiss and metadiabase rock	II R – fair potential; depth to rock depth to hard bedrock is generally greater than 6' in Purcellville and greater than 30" in Tankerville	III – poor potential; depth to rock and slope	IV – grassland agriculture 4E, 4S
23B Purcellville silt loam, (2-7%) (B)	very deep, well drained yellowish-red silty to loamy soil on undulating and gently sloping uplands; developed in residuum weathered from mixed granite gneiss and metadiabase rock	I - good potential depth to hard bedrock is generally greater than 6'	I- good potential	I – prime farmland 2E
27C Airmont very flaggy loam, (7-15%) (B)	very deep, moderately well drained yellowish-brown loamy soil with intermittent perched water tables and stones on moderately steep concave mountain slopes and benches; developed in local colluvium weathered from coarse grained rocks like sandstone, quartzite and charnokite	IV W - very poor potential; seasonal water table depth to hard bedrock is generally greater than 5'	IV- very poor; landscape position, fragipans and prolonged high water table	V - forestry and wildlife 5S
40D Catoctin channery silt loam, (15-25%) (C)	moderately deep, well drained strong brown, shaley/silty soil with few rock outcrops and common flag stones on moderately steep convex sideslopes; developed from greenstone schist	II R – fair potential; depth to rock depth to hard bedrock ranges between 2-4'	III – poor potential; depth to rock and slope	V - forestry and wildlife 4E
43C Myersville-Catoctin Complex, (7-15%) (C)	complex of deep, well drained yellowish-red loamy Myersville and moderately deep, well drained, strong brown, shaly/silty Catoctin soils on rolling convex sideslopes; developed from greenstone schist	II R – fair potential; depth to rock depth to hard bedrock is generally greater than 4' in Myersville and 2 to 4' in Catoctin schist	II - fair potential; moderate permeability and depth to rock	II – secondary cropland 3E, 4E
50D Stumptown flaggy loam, (15-25%) (C)	moderately deep, well to excessively drained skeletal yellowish-brown loamy soils with many quartzite flagstones and boulders on moderately steep mountain sideslopes	II RS – fair potential; shallow to rock and steep slopes depth to hard bedrock ranges from 20 to 40"	III – poor potential; shallow to rock and steep slopes	V- forestry and wildlife 6S
51E Stumptown-Rock outcrop complex (25-45%) (D)	moderately deep, well to excessively drained skeletal yellowish-brown loamy soils with many quartzite outcrops, flagstones and boulders on sloping to steep mountain sideslopes	II RS – fair potential; shallow to rock and steep slopes depth to hard bedrock ranges from 20 to 40"	IV - very poor or no potential; shallow to rock and steep slopes	V- forestry and wildlife 7E,8

52C Cardiff Channery silt loam, (7-15%) (B)	deep, well drained yellowish-brown loamy soils with common quartzite flagstones and boulders on mountain sideslopes and ridgetops	I - good potential	I - good potential	IV- grassland agriculture
		depth to hard bedrock ranges from 40 to 60"		3E
52D Cardiff Channery silt loam, (15-25%) (C)	deep, well drained yellowish-brown loamy soils with common quartzite flagstones and boulders on mountain sideslopes and ridgetops	II RS – fair potential; depth to rock and steep slopes	II - fair potential; depth to rock and steep slopes	V- forestry and wildlife
		depth to hard bedrock ranges from 40 to 60"		4E
52E Cardiff Channery silt loam, (25-45%) (C)	deep, well drained yellowish-brown loamy soils with common quartzite flagstones and boulders on mountain sideslopes and ridgetops	IV RS - very poor potential; depth to rock and steep slopes	IV - very poor or no potential; depth to rock and steep slopes	V- forestry and wildlife
		depth to hard bedrock ranges from 40 to 60"		6E
55B Gleneleg silt loam, (2-7%) (A)	deep, well drained yellowish-red loamy soils with common quartz stones on convex upland and mountain sideslopes and ridgetops	I - good potential	I - good potential	I- prime farmland
		depth to hard bedrock is generally greater than 4'		2E
81C Brumbaugh cobbly silt loam, (7-15%) (B)	very deep moderately well drained gravelly strong brown to yellowish-red loamy soils with discontinuous perched water tables on flat to concave sloping mountain toe slopes and foot slopes; developed from old mountain colluvium acidic rocks	II W – fair potential; perched water tables	III- poor potential	II – secondary cropland
		depth to hard bedrock is generally greater than 6'		3E
82B Scattersville silt loam, (1-7%) brief ponding (D)	very deep somewhat poorly to poorly drained gravelly yellowish-brown mottled strong brown and gray loamy soils on gently sloping concave lowlands along drainageways at the base of the mountains; developed from old mountain colluvium of mixed acid and basic rocks	IV W - very poor potential; perched water tables	IV- very poor potential; high water tables	IV – grassland agriculture
		depth to hard bedrock is generally greater than 6'		4W
89D Weverton very flaggy silt loam, (15-25%) (C)	deep, well drained yellowish-brown loamy soil with many quartzite flagstone on moderately steep mountain side slopes; developed from colluvium and residuum of quartzite	IV G - very poor potential; slippage. mountain colluvium deposits may be unstable when cut (graded); proposals for development should be based on a geotechnical investigation	II- fair potential; moderate permeability; depth to rock	V - forestry and wildlife
		depth to hard bedrock is generally ranges 40 to 60"		7S

APPENDIX D

2010 Census Data

APPENDIX E

Hillsboro Business Advisory Group—Chairman Report

Hillsboro Business Advisory Group—Chairman Report

Purpose: The primary goal of the Business Advisory Group is to help craft a vision and framework for a business environment that will serve to guide the Town’s policies to engender a climate that is mutually beneficial for residents and businesses.

Some of the main questions that were addressed are:

- What will be needed to make Hillsboro an attractive location to potential businesses
- What types of businesses will blend seamlessly with the historical character of the town
- What restrictions should be made on the nature and number of businesses in Hillsboro
- How do we address zoning as it relates to the usage of existing homes and properties
- How do we revise Hillsboro’s current business taxes, rates and utility fee structure to encourage investment and ensure equitability and long-term sustainability.

Thank you to the following for having participated in the first meetings of the Hillsboro Business Advisory Group: Alta Jones, Henry Stribling, Amy Marasco, Mayor Roger Vance, Ray Shields, Cheri Shields, Ray Cowell, Laney Oxman, Michael Oxman, Ronda Powell, George Bazaco, Philip Foltman, K Foltman, complete names....

Tasks for participants of first meeting

The first meeting concluded with participants having the following task to complete: Identify projects that fall into 3 categories-short term, mid-range term and long term.

Short term: these ideas could be implemented during the road project

Mid-range: these ideas were designed to expand on the short term and prepare for long term

Long term: these ideas would be implemented once the road project is finished and would be the core activity that would fulfill the goal of long term sustainability of the town.

Summary of ideas

Short-Term: Create Momentum

We received many great ideas. A theme behind the short-term ideas was “pop-up” with a goal of creating and harnessing momentum and to *permanently* **PUT HILLSBORO ON THE MAP** in everyone’s mind. Momentum has been created over the past few years with outstanding events that have become part of the identity of Hillsboro as a rural hub of activity. Such events include

a summer concert series, a world-class 4th of July Celebration, a recurring lecture series on the US Constitution (fitting as it coincides with the birth of Hillsboro), Spring Garden and Winter Christmas Tours and more.

Because of the logistical challenges that the town will face during the road project, **pop-up events** are very appealing. A pop-up event is an event that does not require permanent permitting and would enable a host (a town resident or someone acting on behalf of the Town of Hillsboro, for example) to create a revenue generating event without an overhead that would otherwise discourage such activity. For example, a town resident (or the Town of Hillsboro itself) could create an “Evening Dinner Experience” at a private residence catered by a celebrity chef. The celebrity chef would draw people to a unique experience of dining in an historic home built at the time of the American Revolution. The town would benefit from such an event not so much in direct revenue toward the town funds (though some meals taxes would be generated) but rather by reinforcing the town’s image as a **destination**.

Indeed, the goal of short-term events is to continue to grow the reputation of the Town of Hillsboro as a **DESTINATION** as opposed to a drive through town.

Below is a list of some of the pop-up ideas that came from the meetings:

1. 1 dinners
2. 2 concerts (direct revenue to town funds)
3. 3 Town driven food during events (direct revenue to town funds)
4. 4 theater
5. 5 movies (direct revenue to town funds)
6. 6 weddings (direct revenue to town funds)
7. 7 ice cream trucks
8. 8 wine contest/festival with local wineries
9. 9 farmer’s markets
10. 10 farm to table dinners
11. 11 coffee shop/bakery
12. 12 specialty food trucks
13. 13 “scheduled” gift shop days (Every 3rd Thursday of the month)
14. 14 Art shows
15. 15 Craft shows
16. 16 Yearly festival (ie. Radish)
17. 17 Start to create a physical environment around the OSS to establish it as a hub of activity: picnic tables, park activities, kid play areas, tourist info office, bike racks,

Another important idea of the short term as it leads into the mid term is to have a strong communication campaign to Hillsboro’s good neighbors (wineries, breweries, local farm to table) and those who do have to transit through the town so as to avoid animosity for the inconveniences that the road project will present.

As Hillsboro develops its brand as a destination it would be useful to start collecting real data on events and activities that take place in and around town. Real data would be in the order of attendance numbers, revenue generated, demographics of attendees and other data that would be of interest to potential long term “investors”.

Mid-Term: Sustain and Prepare

The primary goal of mid-term ideas is to sustain momentum and to lay the groundwork for future long-term plans. This period will be crucial as the road project will be in full steam and there will be a ton of activity that will drain the town’s human resources. Efficient town committees will be a necessity during this period.

During this period, mid-term activities should be focused on the following:

- 1.● Maintaining the smooth operation of town events so as to **sustain** its image to non-residents
- 2.● Events that attract potential long-term players (restaurant owners, BnB owners, real estate agents)
- 3.● Attract entrepreneurs that have a vision of future “gig” economies that do not depend on the traditional “storefront” models of the past (office sharing, on-line businesses, “experience” offerings (wine and dine with celebrities), in-home production studios, home-based workshops
- 4.● Develop strong partnerships with county and state agencies that can help the commercial development of the town **“on our terms”**
- 5.● A study of existing properties within the town to identify which, if any, are best suited for desired long-term businesses (such as restaurant, BnB, event space)
- 6.● Review of Town tax structure to create an appealing business environment for long-term players
- 7.● Study and preparation of viable town parking
- 8.● Sewer project, plan for completion by end of road project
- 9.● Support of local and regional efforts to protect the pastoral nature and history of Western Loudoun

Long-term: Establish and protect Hillsboro for future generations of residents

The Town Council of any town serves the residents of the town in affairs that immediately impact its residents. At the same time, it must keep an eye on the future and make decisions that will impact the future of the town. This has never been so true of the current situation of Hillsboro. The Town of Hillsboro sits at a crossroads of past, present and future with rapid (and even rampant) growth occurring around it. It’s historical significance for Loudoun County and for the entire Commonwealth makes it perhaps unique in nature, a one-of-a-kind town. In many

ways, it is a living museum but with real people and not actors. This, of course, makes it even more real.

The town is faced with an imminent dilemma of sorts: how to maintain its very genuine character and yet survive its internal infrastructure needs while resisting over growth of the area surrounding town. The advisory group's vision of Hillsboro in long term was clear and unanimous: **don't change a thing and capitalize on what Hillsboro is and represents.**

With this daunting task at hand, the long-term ideas for Hillsboro focus on the following:

- 1.● Preserve the viewshed in town and the areas surrounding the town: maintain the look and feel of the homes as they have been for centuries, support all efforts to protect the farm lands outside of the town limits
- 2.● Be a leader in supporting and developing eco/agro-tourism
- 3.● Branding of Hillsboro as **The Gap**
- 4.● Operate a powerful website that could serve as an advertising platform for local and regional businesses
- 5.● Identify a small number of "niche" businesses that can thrive within the town limits, providing needed town revenue without changing the character of the town: up-scale restaurant, BnB, event space, in-home future driven businesses
- 6.● Become the **Hub** of Western Loudoun Activities: best traditional events, best cultural events, best historical events, tourist center for activities
- 7.● Create a unique brand of seasonal businesses that take advantage of the historical nature of the town without degrading it: "permanent" pop-up businesses (previously used short-term ideas that have long-term success), seasonal event-driven activities, specialty boutiques, galleries, gift shops that do not need to operate year-round
- 8.● Be a leader and a model of the towns of Loudoun (and the Commonwealth) in affairs that affect small towns: this is "how" it can be done -- ie. the road project itself, small business development
- 9.● Utilize the Old Stone School as a profitable revenue generating center through a myriad of activities
- 10.● _____ Procure land that can be used for parking
- 11.● _____ Procure multi-use land that can augment the activities currently operating out of the Old Stone School

This summary drawn from the conclusions of the efforts of the Business Advisory Group is presented to the Town Council with the goal of creating a list of **immediate action items**. The execution of these action items would be delegated to town committees once established by the Town Council.